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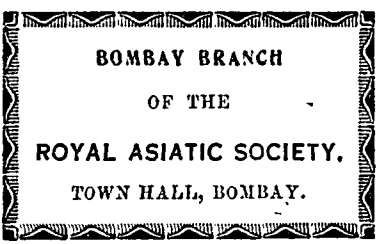

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Darnley.

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LIVES

OF THE

QUEENS OF SCOTLAND,

&c.

BY

AGNES STRICKLAND.

TTA e1

Queen Mary's Forced Abdication.

VOL. V.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS,
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LIVES

OF THE

QUEENS OF SCOTLAND

AND

14.680

ENGLISH PRINCESSES

CONNECTED WITH THE REGAL SUCCESSION OF GREAT BRITAIN

TTA.e-1

BY

Agnes Strickland

AUTHOR OF

"LIVES OF THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND"

"The treasures of antiquity laid up
In old historic rolls I opened."—BEAUMONT.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

TO

THE FIFTH VOLUME

FRONTISPIECE—PORTRAIT OF DARNLEY. Copied by Mr GOURLAY STEEL from VIRTUE'S Engraving of the curious Original Painting formerly in the possession of MARGARET COUNTESS OF LENNOX.

VIGNETTE—QUEEN MARY'S COMPULSORY ABDICATION. Designed by Mr GOURLAY STEEL. (*See Page* 308.)

FACSIMILE OF THE INTERCEPTED LETTER ADDRESSED TO QUEEN MARY BY DARNLEY'S MOTHER, MARGARET COUNTESS OF LENNOX. Traced from the inedited holograph in Her Majesty's State Paper Office by NETHERCLIFT. . . . 372

THE

QUEENS OF SCOTLAND

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXV.

SUMMARY

LIFE OF MARY STUART—*Continued.* Dangerous position of Queen Mary after the birth of her son—Selfish policy of her nobles—Her personal proceedings at Stirling and Edinburgh—Her consort's antagonism to Lethington—Her meeting with Lethington at Willie Bell's house—Her continued displeasure with Lennox—She reconciles Lethington and Bothwell—Her Coalition Cabinet—She sorts her jewels—Settles the colours to be worn by the nobles at her baby's christening—Obtains a pecuniary aid to defray the expenses—Declension of the Protestant interest in Scotland—Pope's nuncio in France complains of her lukewarmness to that of Rome—Mary excuses herself from receiving his visit—She sends Bothwell to quell the Border insurgents—He is resisted and wounded—Buchanan's calumnies on Mary exposed—She leaves Edinburgh with her Court on her judicial progress—Darnley absents himself—Mary opens her royal assize at Jedburgh—Visits Bothwell with her Council at Hermitage Castle—Reasons for undertaking that journey—Adventures on her way—Her dangerous illness—She prepares herself for death—Requests the prayers of the Reformed churches—Forgives her enemies—Exhorts her nobles to unity—Commends her infant to their care—Desires he may be brought up in the fear of God—Declares her abhorrence of persecution—Fluctuations of her malady—Her death reported—Darnley's neglect of her—His tardy arrival at Jedburgh—Cool reception and hasty departure—Queen Mary's house at Jedburgh—Apples, citrons, and pomegranates brought to her during her sickness—Her bounty to the poor of Jedburgh—Her clemency to criminals—She leaves Jedburgh for Kelso.

THE machinery for the revolution which was to transfer the sceptre of Scotland from the hand of Mary Stuart to that of her infant boy, the unconscious puppet in whose

name the elective sovereignty of a regency might be exercised by the leader of that movement, was suggested by the matrimonial jars between her and her consort; but these were not the exciting causes.

The birth of her son, so far from strengthening the royal mother's throne, was the signal for an extensive conspiracy among her nobles for bringing her reign to a close before the completion of her twenty-fifth year—the age at which the Sovereigns of Scotland were privileged to revoke all Crown grants, whether conceded by their Regents or themselves previously to that period. The grants made by the Duke of Châtelherault and the late Queen-Regent had been enormous, and those of Mary herself, in her youthful inexperience, so lavish, that the regal revenues were reduced to one-third of their proper value. The resumption of this property became, therefore, a matter of absolute necessity for the support of the government and the defence of the realm. But the prospect of such a measure, however constitutional, was so little agreeable to the parties in possession, that, with few exceptions, all were ready to welcome any expedient whereby the evil day of restitution might be postponed for a new term of upwards of four-and-twenty years, involving, withal, the not improbable contingency of retaining the property in perpetuity. The wealth and power of a selfish oligarchy had increased so greatly during six successive regal minorities in Scotland, that a seventh was eagerly desired, and the earliest opportunity for producing it was boldly seized.

While the undercurrents that influenced the adverse tide of Mary Stuart's destiny were working in unsuspected channels for the accomplishment of this event, her attention was divided between preparations for the christening of the Prince, the arrangement of his separate establishment, and plans for securing, as she fondly imagined, the peace and internal happiness of her realm, by effecting a general reconciliation between her contentious nobles, and forming a Coalition Cabinet from the leading members of the two great factions whose strife agitated her council-chamber.

How closely her actions were watched by the spies in her household, and how minutely reported to the English authorities at Berwick, abundant proof is afforded by the Border correspondence at this epoch. The information thus supplied of her proceedings during her rapid transits between Stirling and Edinburgh, in September 1566, casts an important light on the otherwise inscrutable behaviour of Darnley on the 29th and 30th of that month, by filling up the outlines already before the reader of that mysterious passage in the personal history of the unfortunate pair. "The Secretary (Lethington) came to Stirling the 4th of this instant at night, and did lie at one Willie Bell's; and on the morrow the Queen came to Willie Bell's to the Secretary, and there did dine with him, and remained a good part of the afternoon with him, and liked him very well; and so the Queen returned to the castle of Stirling, and on the morrow came to Edinburgh, the Earls of Moray and Argyll with her. The Countess of Moray remains at Stirling, and hath the government and keeping of the young Prince until the Queen's return to Stirling."[1]

The interview between Queen Mary and Lethington was of a purely diplomatic character. She had been induced by her brother Moray, during her visit to his uncle Mar at Alloa Castle, to accord her pardon to this specious traitor, notwithstanding the angry opposition of her husband. But Darnley having forfeited her confidence by his misconduct, she paid less attention to his passionate denunciations of Lethington's guilty proceedings in the plot for Riccio's murder, than to her cooler Premier's protestations of the innocence of his confederate, his devotion to her service, and the important use she might make of his talents for the good of her realm. Mary knew it was her duty as a Sovereign, to be guided by the advice of her minister rather than the caprices of her husband, who was at that time the most unpopular person in Scotland. Under these circumstances, she was persuaded to admit Lethington to her presence as the preliminary to reinstating him in his

[1] Letter from Sir John Forster to Sir W. Cecil, dated Berwick, 8th September 1566. Inedited State Paper MS., Border Correspondence.

former office of Secretary of State.[1] To avoid, however, the danger of a personal collision between him and her irascible consort, she ventured not to receive him at Stirling Castle, where she and Darnley were at that time holding their court as King and Queen of Scotland, but resorted to the foolish step of granting him a clandestine interview in the house of a person of inferior degree—with what privacy the English Warden's letter to Cecil has shown; and if the news reached Berwick so soon, it would not, of course, be very long in travelling from Willie Bell's house in the High Street of Stirling to Darnley's apartments in the Castle. That no scandals of the Queen were connected with the report sent to Cecil, must be attributed to the fact that Lethington was the confederate of Moray, and a secret-service man of England. It is certain that no incident of so suspicious a nature has ever been recorded in support of her alleged intimacy with Bothwell, who possessed neither the elegance of person nor the insinuating manners of the accomplished Secretary. But Darnley's jealousy was political, not personal; his anger was excited at the little regard the Queen paid to his marital authority in affairs of State, and by his being utterly excluded from any share in the government, while Moray, who had sinned far more deeply against her than he had ever done, had the whole guiding of her councils, and carried every measure in his despite. The dear-bought experience Darnley had acquired of Moray and his faction, during the fatal league he had made with them against his wife and Sovereign, was unavailing to preserve her from falling into the snares they were weaving round her. She could not be induced to believe his warnings; he had not deserved to be believed, and she imputed all he said to petulance, prejudice, and the evil promptings of his father, whose influence had proved fatal to her connubial peace.

"The Secretary," continues our authority,[2] "is appointed to be at Edinburgh the 11th of this instant with the Queen.

[1] Letter from Sir John Forster to Sir W. Cecil, dated Berwick, 8th September 1566. Inedited State Paper MS., Border Correspondence.
[2] Ibid.

There shall shortly be a Convention, to appoint them which shall have the government of the Prince. The Queen's coming to Edinburgh at this time is to sit in her Exchequer to understand her whole revenues, and to appoint what shall be for the keeping of her house and the young Prince's house. After the Convention it is thought the Secretary shall come to the Court, if the Parliament hold. The Queen hath her husband in small estimation, and the Earl of Lennox came not in her sight since the death of Davy."[1]

The faults of the inexperienced Darnley, a petulant youth in his teens, were excusable in comparison with the guilt of his cold-hearted, plotting father, from whom, as Mary pathetically observed, "he ought to have had far different counsel." She had forgiven Lennox for his treason against herself and her realm in her orphaned infancy, restored him to his estates, and loaded him with benefits; and he had in return, because she refused to violate her duty to God and her people by an illegal demission of her regal power to hands unmeet to exercise it, poisoned her consort's mind against her, and persuaded him to league with traitors within her realm, and outlawed rebels without, in the most atrocious of conspiracies against her person and authority, for the purpose of usurping her throne. He had imperilled her life, and that of her unborn babe, his grandson, by urging that the murder of David Riccio should be perpetrated in her presence, and allowed his son to commit himself irrevocably by basely introducing the band of assassins into her bedchamber, to agitate, menace, insult, and capture her. Nor should it be forgotten that he, her father-in-law and uncle, had assisted at a council where her death or life-long imprisonment had been decreed. Who, then, can wonder that she suffered him not to enter her presence again? The only marvel is, that, thus intolerably aggrieved, both as Sovereign and woman, by her own subject, she did not bring him to the block his offences had so richly merited. That Mary allowed Lennox to pass

[1] Letter from Sir John Forster to Sir W. Cecil, dated Berwick, 8th September 1566. Inedited State Paper MS., Border Correspondence.

unscathed, and employed no means, either direct or indirect, for vengeance, ought to be regarded as an instance of magnanimity and Christian forbearance rare indeed among princes of the sixteenth century, and perfectly incompatible with the vindictive temper imputed to her by her defamers. "Her whole reign," observes a biographer, who has based his statement on documentary evidence, "was a series of plots and pardons."[1] There was not, in fact, one member of the confederacy by which her fall was accomplished, who had not been a recipient of her grace for some previous act of treason. Unfortunately for herself, those whom Mary Stuart pardoned, she was, with too confiding generosity, apt to trust. The most successful of her regal predecessors had found it expedient, in their dealings with the overweening oligarchs who oppressed the people and controlled the Crown, to act on the worldly-wise maxim, "divide and rule;" but Mary, a peace-maker by nature, and a peace Sovereign by principle, desired to govern a realm in which all ranks should be united in love to each other for love of her. At the juncture which claims our present attention, she had taken some pains to effect a pacification between the rival claimants of the rich ecclesiastical domains of Haddington, Bothwell and Lethington, who had been threatening each other's lives for the last four months.[2] "The Queen," writes Forster to Cecil, "hath made the agreement between the Earl of Bothwell and the Secretary."[3] Eager as Lethington was to retain the whole of the abbey lands adjoining his father's estate, he saw the policy of submitting with a good grace to the Queen's arbitration. By resigning a portion of his prey, he removed a previously insuperable obstacle to acting as Bothwell's colleague in the new ministry which Mary was labouring to form, and was reinstated in his former office of Secretary of State. As for his reconciliation with Bothwell, that was conducted, according to the Asmodean principle, with outward pledges of amity and deadlier purposes of

[1] Chalmers.

[2] Inedited letter from Drury to Cecil, June 20. Border Correspondence —State Paper Office.

[3] Inedited, Sept. 19, 1566.

malice. He played his game so finely withal, as to succeed in beguiling Bothwell into becoming the instrument of his vengeance on Darnley, and thus, effecting Bothwell's ruin, remained the undisputed possessor of the abbey lands. The events of the few brief months that intervened between the conception of Lethington's daring plot for ridding himself of his two great adversaries, Darnley and Bothwell, and its consummation, resemble the progressive scenes of a startling tragedy—a tragedy in which the part assigned to the royal heroine was about as voluntary as that of the puppet queen on the mechanist's chess-board, whose springs are directed by the unseen hands of the deep-seeing planner of the game. The only move in which Mary exercised free will was the fatal one of associating the parties who were denounced by her husband as deeply implicated in the late conspiracy against her person and government, with Bothwell, in whose hands was the whole military power of the realm, and who, acting independently of the English faction, had up to that moment proved an effectual bulwark against the ambitious designs of Moray and his confederates. Well might Darnley take alarm when he observed symptoms of a coalition so ominous to the royal house of Stuart. His first impulse had been to provide for his personal safety by securing the means of leaving Scotland; but his father having objected to his doing so, he had made a desperate effort to induce Mary to dismiss from her cabinet, not Bothwell, to whom he never expressed the slightest ill-will, but Moray and his guilty confederates, Lethington, Sir John Bellenden, and Makgill.[1] Unfortunately, his bad temper, venting itself in a sullen disobliging demeanour to Mary, defeated his own purpose, offended her, and irrevocably committed him with those whose presence in her Court he had refused to tolerate. Bitter cause had Mary to lament her infatuation, when too late, in allowing herself to be deluded by the insidious counsels of her Premier, instead of listening to the warning voice of her husband, who knew their practices and principles too well.

[1] Letter of Sir Robert Melville—printed in Keith.

The day after Darnley's angry departure from Holyrood, a general reconciliation took place between Moray, Huntley, Bothwell, and Argyll; and they not only agreed to act officially together as ministerial colleagues, but entered into a secret band of alliance to fortify and support each other in all their undertakings against all opponents.[1] The arrangements for the Coalition Cabinet being thus completed, Moray continued to exercise the office of Prime Minister; and, as he had done ever since the Queen "took her chamber" in Edinburgh Castle, before the birth of the Prince, engrossed the principal direction of the civil power of the realm. Bothwell, as the Queen's Lieutenant and hereditary Lord Admiral of Scotland, had the military and naval force, such as it was, under his control. The Earl of Huntley was Lord Chancellor—a dignity previously held and still claimed by the outlawed traitor, Morton, because it was in Scotland a life-long appointment. Moray's brother-in-law, Argyll, was Justice-General; Lethington, Secretary of State; Sir John Bellenden, Justice Clerk; Mr James Makgill, Clerk-Register; and Richardson, another creature of Moray's, the Lord Treasurer. Associated with this junta, as members of the Privy Council, were Darnley's nearest kinsman, the Roman Catholic Earl of Atholl; the profligate Adam Bothwell, Protestant Bishop of Orkney; Alexander Gordon, Protestant Bishop of Galloway; John Leslie the historian, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ross; the Earl of Rothes; Sir John Maxwell of Terregles, lord of Herries; and one or two others.

As an interlude between the diplomatic toils of settling the claims and contentions of persons heretofore diametrically opposed in creed and party, and inducing them to act with, instead of against, each other, Mary recreated herself with the more feminine amusement of "perusing and sorting over her jewels,"[2] and issuing directions for the costume that was to be worn by the noble assistants at the approaching royal solemnity of her baby's christening,

[1] Moray's Answer to the Protestation of the Earls of Huntley and Argyll, printed in Keith.

[2] Forster to Cecil, Sept. 19—Border Correspondence. State Paper MS.

appointing that every one of them should be attended by a certain number of followers, arrayed in different colours, "and hath given," pursues our authority, "to the Earl of Moray a suit of green, Argyll red, and Bothwell blue, of her own charges.[1] The preparation for the baptism is making at Stirling with great speed." The Convention of nobles, assembled for that purpose at Edinburgh, granted "a subsidy of £12,000 to defray the expenses of their Majesties' dearest son, the native Prince of the realm," to be paid by an assessment on the Three Estates of Scotland, in the following equitable proportions: £6000 by the spiritual estate, £4000 by the barons and freeholders, and £2000 by the burghs.[2] Thus no part of this tax pressed on the indigent, but was levied on those whose wealth could well support the burden for the honour of the nation. It was somewhat remarkable that the Lords of Convention, by whom this tax was granted for the ceremonial of a baptism according to the Romish ritual, were, with the exception of the Earl of Atholl, all Protestants, including Moray, Argyll, Rothes, Lethington, and Bothwell. Surely it would have been more consistent with the religious professions of some of these gentlemen to have refused the aid, unless the heir of the Crown were baptised in the Reformed faith. But these worthies had all some private interests of their own to serve, to which the cause of the true Evangile was but an inferior object.

The Bishop of Mondivi, papal Nuncio at the Court of France, in a letter to Cosmo I., Duke of Tuscany, affirms "that the Protestant cause in Scotland was losing ground at this juncture;" adding, "that the Queen, if it had pleased her to enter effectually into the policy of the other Catholic sovereigns in Europe, might have done much towards the restoration of her own faith; but nothing could induce her to act as she was required in that matter."[3] This

[1] Forster to Cecil, September 19—Border Correspondence. State Paper MS., inedited. On this incident, simple and innocent as it was, Buchanan has built his absurd calumny of Mary's attention to Bothwell's dress for the Prince's baptism.

[2] Keith, from Privy Council Decreets.

[3] Labanoff's Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart.

prelate had been appointed by the Pope to the office of nuncio to the Court of Holyrood; but Mary, who feared his arrival might rekindle the horrors of a religious war in her realm, politely excused herself from receiving him, by pleading her apprehension that "he might be exposed to very uncourteous usage, and that it was not in her power to protect his life," although Mondivi "protested his willingness to brave all consequences, if her Majesty had sufficient courage to do what was requisite on her part, by receiving his visit in a proper spirit."[1]

After the funds for the christening of her boy had been voted, Mary's next care was for the redress of the disorders which, during the late domestic troubles, had broken out again on the Borders, and for this purpose she commanded the Earl of Bothwell to proceed into Liddesdale and take all notorious offenders into custody, and lodge them in the dungeons of Hermitage Castle till he could present them before her in the justice-court, which she had proclaimed her intention of holding at Jedburgh in the second week of October.[2] The date of Bothwell's departure on this mission is generally stated to have been either on the 6th or 7th of that month; but Lord Scrope's letter to Cecil on the 6th proves that it must have taken place several days earlier, and that the dangerous bodily hurts Bothwell received in the discharge of his duty were inflicted, not on the 7th of October, but the 5th. "I have,"[3] writes Scrope, "presently gotten intelligence out of Scotland that the Earl of Bothwell, being in Liddesdale for the apprehension of certain disordered persons there, had apprehended the Lairds of Mangerton and Whitehaugh, with sundry other Armstrongs of the surname and kindred, whom he had put within the Hermitage. And yesterday, going about to take such like persons of the Elliots, in pursuit of them, his lordship, being foremost and far before his company, encountered one John Elliot of the Park hand to hand, and shot him through the thigh with a *dag* [horse-pistol]; upon which wound, the man, feel-

[1] Labanoff's Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart.
[2] Tytler's Hist. Scot. Goodall. Chalmers. Keith.
[3] October 6. State Paper MS., Border Correspondence.

ing himself in peril of death, with a two-handed sword so cruelly assailed him that he killed him ere he could get any rescue or succour from his men."[1] The daring outlaw, John Elliot of the Park, was the chief of that formidable band of "strapping Elliots" whom the English Warden boasted of having stirred up against him. The particulars following of their personal encounter will be new to the general reader, and are characteristic of the spirit in which the Border conflicts were carried on, as well as the desperate nature of the service to which the Queen had deputed the man for whom she has been accused of cherishing a reckless passion.

Instead of being slain, as erroneously reported, Bothwell, having in reality wounded and overcome Elliot in single combat, admitted him to quarter. Elliot, after he had surrendered, asked his captor "whether he would save his life?" "If an assize will make you clean, I shall be heartily content," replied the Earl, "but it behoves you to pass to the Queen's Grace."[2] Hearing this, John Elliot slipped from his horse to run away; the Earl, perceiving his purpose, fired his pistol at him, wounded him in the body, and alighted with intent to have retaken him, but unluckily slipped over a *slough*, and fell. Elliot threw himself upon him, gave him three wounds—one in the head, one in the body, and one in the hand—and effected his escape, but not before the Earl had stabbed him twice in the breast with his whingar. Mortal thrusts they proved, for Elliot died when he had ascended a hill about a mile from the spot.[3] Bothwell's servants found their lord in a state of insensibility, weltering in his blood, and carried him to Hermitage Castle. But as misfortunes never come

[1] October 6. State Paper MS., Border Correspondence.

[2] Diurnal of Occurrents.

[3] Every one must see that Sir Walter Scott's animated description of the death-grapple between Roderick Dhu and Fitz-James was suggested by this incident. John Elliot of the Park was not only the leader of a formidable band of the Border insurgents, but the head of a sept, and claimed to be the rightful captain of Hermitage Castle. Buchanan, however, terms him "a pitiful highwayman," and endeavours to distort Bothwell's really gallant conduct in the discharge of his duty into a case of cowardice. His statements ought, as a general rule, to be regarded as the reverse of fact.

singly, the thieves whom he had left in ward there had broken loose, made themselves masters of his fortress, and would not allow him or his servants to enter till Robert of the Shaw came up, and told them, "if they would let my Lord of Bothwell in, he would save all their lives and let them gang hame." On these conditions they consented; and if they had not been prevailed on to do so, Bothwell and all his company would have been slain.[1]

As the news of Bothwell's injuries, magnified by errant fame into reports of his death, had reached Carlisle on the 6th of October, official intelligence that he had been resisted and dangerously wounded was doubtless received in Edinburgh about the same time. A Council was held there that day to take into consideration the best means for enforcing the Queen's authority, extending Bothwell's commission, and making the necessary arrangements for carrying into effect her resolution of coming to his support. That this was no new or hasty impulse, the result of misdirected passion and womanly caprice, the following passage from a letter written by Bedford to Cecil, as far back as the 3d of August, will testify: "She meaneth now shortly to go against the Laird of Cessford and his son with great force, and to keep a justice-seat at Jedworth for that purpose; but some doubt whether it will hold or not, and that Bothwell shall come with her force and subdue all; but the gentlemen Borderers, as the Lairds of Cessford and Buccleuch, and the rest of the surnames (a very few only except, not a handful to be accounted of), have promised to live and die with Cessford, and to withstand Bothwell, unless the Queen came in person."[2]

The misdemeanour committed by the young Laird of Cessford was the barbarous murder of the Abbot of Kelso,[3] his own father-in-law, and also defying the legal authorities, in which he was openly abetted by his family connections and several powerful septs in that neighbourhood, secretly

[1] Diurnal of Occurrents in Scotland, p. 100-1.
[2] Stevenson's Illustrations of the Reign of Mary, p. 164.
[3] Forster to Cecil, July 18, 1566—Border Correspondence—State Paper Office MS.

encouraged by the English Warden, for the purpose of promoting an insurrection against the Scottish government.[1] Queen Mary, viewing the matter in its proper light, perceived the necessity of making a judicial progress through that turbulent district of her realm, attended by force sufficient to compel submission to the laws. Even before she left her lying-in chamber in Edinburgh Castle, she and her Council had caused summonses to be issued in the joint names of herself and her consort, "enjoining the nobles, gentlemen, and all substantial persons, to meet there, August 13, it being their Majesties' intention to hold their assizes throughout the kingdom, beginning at Jedburgh." A few days later, the magistrates and inhabitants of that town were directed "to prepare meat, drink, and lodgings for men and horses, in readiness for the justice-court, to be holden there on the 17th of August, at which the King and Queen had signified their intention to be present."[2] The near approach of harvest, however, rendering that season inconvenient, the royal pair were induced to postpone their purpose for a while, and proclamation was made in their united names, September 24, charging the nobles, gentlemen, and freeholders of the adjacent shires to meet their Majesties at Melrose on the 8th of October.[3] It was therefore well known that the Queen's journey to Jedburgh was appointed long before Bothwell's departure into Liddesdale, and that, so far from being hurried in consequence of the news of his accident, it was delayed till the last moment. The cause of her lingering in Edinburgh till the very day she had appointed to be at Melrose, may be attributed to the embarrassment and suspense occasioned by her husband's perversity in withdrawing himself from conjugal and regal companionship with her, and continuing to indulge his sullen humour in his father's house at Glasgow, instead of performing his duty by accompanying her to the trysting-place, thus putting a marked affront not only on

[1] Forster to Cecil, July 18, 1566—Border Correspondence—State Paper Office. Bedford to Cecil. Tytler's History of Scotland.
[2] Goodall, vol. i. p. 303. [3] Ibid., 303. Privy Council Registers.

her and her Council, but on the high-spirited feudal militia, the sole defence of the southern border. In this inconsiderate conduct, as in everything else, Darnley played the part of a petulant boy, who neither understood his own position in the realm, nor the temper of the people he aspired to govern. But well did Mary, as the native Sovereign of Scotland, imbued from her cradle with a proper sense of the duties of her high vocation, and deeply read in the tragic history of her predecessors, know that not to meet her subjects, after having convened them, would be regarded as a great contempt, and involve both herself and her English husband in extreme unpopularity. If she cherished a hope that he would see the propriety of returning to Holyrood in time to accompany her to Melrose, it was doomed to disappointment; and however painful it might be to her feelings as a woman to appear on so public an occasion as a deserted wife, she found herself compelled, after waiting till the last moment, to leave Edinburgh without him. The remark of the acute observer Randolph, "The Queen does everything in her power to oblige Darnley, but cannot prevail on him to do the least thing to oblige her,"[1] was only too characteristic of the history of their wedded life.

In far different fashion from that described by her libeller Buchanan—who represents her as "flinging away in haste like ane mad woman, by great journeys by post in the sharp time of winter, first to Melrose and then to Jedburgh"—did Mary Stuart set out in royal state from Edinburgh, on her long-appointed judicial progress, attended by her Ministers of State, her Privy Council, her great law-officers and her nobles, and accompanied by her whole Court.[2] She proceeded no farther than Melrose that day, where she was met by the gentry of the adjacent shires, and their followers, in obedience to her royal letters and proclamation of the 24th of September.[3] Robertson and Laing, in their eager zeal to criminate this much calumniated Princess, have committed themselves for ever as historians by repeat-

[1] Randolph to Cecil, July 18, 1565—State Paper Office MS.
[2] Birrel's Diary. [3] Goodall. Chalmers.

ing Buchanan's reiterated misrepresentations about this journey. To have traced her proceedings, and verified the dates of her movements, by the test of the Privy Council Records, Privy Seal Registers, and other contemporary documents, would not only have consumed much time, but exposed the shameless falsehoods of her libeller, by proving that Mary, instead of instantly flying to Hermitage Castle with the impatience of a lover, was actively engaged in the performance of her regal duties at Jedburgh, where she opened her assize, October 9, and for six successive days continued to bestow unremitting attention on the numerous criminal cases claiming her personal jurisdiction—no light or trivial amusement for a young lady in her four-and-twentieth year. She also presided at the two Privy Councils holden on the 10th and the 11th of October, and attended to the usual routine of business, signing official papers, receiving petitions, appeals, and personal suits, and granting audiences. It was not till the 16th of the month that she found herself able to proceed to Hermitage Castle,[1] to hold that brief conference with her wounded Lord-lieutenant, the motives of which have been grossly misrepresented by her adversaries.

"At her arrival at Jedburgh," says Buchanan, "she heard sure news of Bothwell's life, yet her affection, impatient of delay, could not temper itself, but must need betray her outrageous love; and in an inconvenient time of the year, despising all discommodities of the way and weather, and all dangers of thieves, she betook herself headlong to her journey, with ane company such as na man of any honest degree would have adventured his life and goods among them;"[2]—no other, gentle reader, than the Queen's base brother Moray, her treacherous Secretary of State, the Lord of Lethington, and the rest of her Cabinet Council, whose principles the verity of history permits us not to vindicate. An evil company, in sooth, they were; and no one knew better than their literary organ, Buchanan,

[1] Privy Council Records. Birrel's Diary. Chalmers. Tytler. Privy Seal Registers.

[2] Buchanan's Detection of the Doings of Marie Queen of Scots, translated in 1572, and dedicated to Queen Elizabeth.

how unmeet they were to be trusted with the lives and properties of honest men. Alas for the confiding woman who committed herself and her realm to such disloyal guidance! If any blame attached to Mary for visiting Bothwell at Hermitage Castle, it belonged to them as her advisers and companions on the journey. "Her Majesty," observes a dry contemporary chronicle, "was requested and advised to go and visit him at a house called the Hermitage, to learn from him the state of her affairs in that county, of which the said lord was hereditary governor. In pursuance of this object, she proceeded thither with speed, accompanied by the Earl of Moray and other nobles, in whose presence she conferred with the said Earl, and returned the same day to Jedburgh, and on the morrow she fell ill."[1] Such, then, is the simple fact on which so monstrous an amount of injurious inferences has been based. There would have been nothing disgraceful to a female sovereign, even if she had honoured with a public mark of sympathy and respect one of her great officers of state who was suffering from severe personal injuries, received while bravely performing his duty to her and his country; but neither passion nor sentiment had anything to do with Mary's visit to Bothwell—it was plainly a matter of State business. As the commander of that district, he had many affairs of the utmost difficulty and delicacy under his charge, especially the secret correspondence with Queen Mary's party in the north of England, and the numerous spies whom it was necessary to employ in watching the movements of the outlawed Scotch traitors, and the proceedings of the English military force at Carlisle, Newcastle, and Berwick. Intelligence of the utmost importance to the safety of the realm might be in his possession while he was disabled from using his pen, probably matters not of a nature to be intrusted to a verbal messenger. His reconciliation with Lethington and Moray, hitherto his mortal foes, was of such recent date that he would scarcely confide anything of par-

[1] Fragment of a contemporary History of Mary Queen of Scots in French—British Museum. Cotton. Lib., Calig., b. iv. 104.

ticular moment to them or their underlings, unless in the presence of the Queen; if indeed they, who, till within the last three weeks, had never encountered him without exchanging menaces, could have felt disposed to trust themselves in his headquarters without the protection of her company. These considerations may well explain the fact, that it was at their request and counsel that the fair Sovereign of Scotland was induced to undertake her ill-omened expedition, to confer in person with her disabled Lord-lieutenant of the Border, in her own royal fortress, the *Armitage* or arsenal of Liddesdale, corruptly called Hermitage Castle, where he lay.

The distance, twenty miles, was not much more than Mary had performed with ease on various occasions—especially when she and Darnley rode their memorable race against time, in their hasty flitting from Perth to Callander, to escape the threefold ambush laid against his life and her liberty by the Earl of Moray and his confederates. Sixteen months had not passed away since she performed that distance with ease and spirit in five hours, on a midsummer Sabbath morn. Now it was brisk October, no unpleasant season for a ride across the country in the south of Scotland, notwithstanding all Buchanan's declamations about "the shairp time of winter and discommodities of the way and weather." Of course, the Queen, who was free to choose her own day, did not select a foul one. Accompanied by her brother Moray, and most probably by his Countess, and the other ladies who were with her at Jedburgh, the Queen rode to Hermitage Castle, October 16, and conferred with Bothwell in the presence of her Council for a couple of hours.[1] "His illness," says M. Mignet, "furnished most conclusive proofs of Mary Stuart's attachment to him." But where are the evidences from which these conclusions are drawn? The only fact that can be adduced is, that she visited him eight days after the accident occurred; of the necessity for this visit, in a political

[1] Tytler's Hist. of Scotland, vol. vii. p. 48.

point of view, cogent reason has been adduced. Crawford's Memoirs, quoted by M. Mignet as his authority for this statement, declare, indeed, "that the Queen was so highly grieved in heart that she took no repose in body till she saw him." But as the accident occurred on the 5th of October, and she made no effort to see him till the 16th, the facts are at variance with the assumption, and prove that Crawford was in error, being misled, like many others, by Buchanan's libels.

That Mary was seriously uneasy, and even distressed in mind, when she learned that her authority had been set at nought by her unruly Border lairds, and her Lord-lieutenant resisted and dangerously wounded, cannot be doubted; and that, being within twenty miles of the place where he lay, disabled by the nature of his hurts from writing, she, as his Sovereign, in compliance with the advice of her Council, took an opportunity of honouring him with a visit, is certain. But what are the proofs of her demeanour as a lover? Did she, we would ask, show him marks of attention in his helpless state, such as Queen Elizabeth graciously vouchsafed to her sick Premier, by administering nourishment to him with her own hands? Did she plead the fatigue of her long ride, the shortness of the days, the dangerous state of the country, as excuses for not returning to Jedburgh the same night, that she might linger near him? Did she watch over his sick-bed, and cherish him with the like fond solicitude and vigilant care she had manifested for her dying husband, Francis II., and for Darnley, in the two severe illnesses in which she had played the tender office of a nurse, reckless of personal danger, with the unwearied devotedness of conjugal affection? On the contrary, nothing could shake her determinate resolution not to pass the night in Hermitage Castle. Yet, strange to say, the brevity of her sojourn there has, with that obliquity of the reasoning powers incidental to falsehood and prejudice, been adduced as part and parcel of the impropriety of her conduct. Buchanan assumes that she dashed back in such haste to Jedburgh to make comfortable arrangements for Bothwell's removal there as soon

as he should be well enough to travel;[1] M. Mignet, that she might get back in time to write a long letter to him the same night. The Treasurer's Accounts, undoubtedly, certify the payment of six shillings to "ane boy passing from Jedburgh, October 17, with ane *mass* of writings of our Sovereign to the Earl of Bothwell."[2] But this mass of writings—the quantity speaks for the nature of the matter—would be, not a voluminous love-letter, but the official warrants, circulars, and summonses necessary for Bothwell's officers to disperse to the Queen's lieges, and all from whom Crown service was due, and to empower his authorities to take refractory persons into custody. Her Privy Seal Register bears witness that during the brief sojourn the Queen made at Hermitage Castle she was occupied in transacting business, for she signed and executed various papers. The oral chroniclers of that neighbourhood always connected with Mary's personal adventures that day the loss of a gold signet-ring with a Scriptural device. This tradition was, a few years ago, curiously corroborated by a mole turning up the ground near the ruins of Hermitage Castle, when a gold ring, of the rude workmanship of the period, was found glittering on the surface of the newly-raised soil—a type of some of the long-hidden evidences of her innocence which the humble pioneers of truth are ever and anon discovering in places where they would least think of searching for them.[3]

An alarming accident had well-nigh befallen Queen Mary on her way back to Jedburgh the same afternoon; for as she and her train were galloping at full speed across a swampy plain, her palfrey suddenly sank up to the saddle-girths in a treacherous morass, which is still called, in memory of that circumstance, the *Queen's Mire*. This local tradition is attested by a relic: a lady's antique silver spur found in or near the Queen's Mire, claims, of course, the honour of being the veritable one lost by the fair royal

[1] Detection of the Doings of Marie Queen of Scots—Anderson's Collection. Also Hist. Scot.

[2] Royal Records in the General Register House, Edinburgh.

[3] The device represents the Judgment of Solomon. It is said to be now in the possession of an emigrant watchmaker at Galt, in Canada West.

rider, in her struggles to extricate herself and her floundering steed from the "slough of despond" in which both were in danger of being fatally engulfed. A darker doom was preparing for Mary Stuart.

The day after her return to Jedburgh she was attacked with a dangerous illness, which has been attributed by some of her historians to the fatigue of her journey, and by others to her distress on account of Bothwell's wound,[1] although she had seen and left him in a fair way of recovery.

Her acute Secretary, Lethington, who, from the nature of his office, possessed better opportunities than most persons of observing the private feelings of his Sovereign, writes to Beton, Archbishop of Glasgow: "The occasion of the Queen's sickness, so far as I can understand, is caused by thought and displeasure; and I trow, by what I could wring further of her own declaration to me, the root of it is the King."[2] He adds, by way of comment on the admission he had succeeded in drawing from his dejected royal mistress, "For she has done him so great honour, without the advice of her friends, and contrary to the advice of her subjects; and he, on the other hand, has recompensed her with such ingratitude, and misuses himself so far towards her, that it is a heart-break to her to think that he should be her husband, and how to be free from him she has no outgait."[3] That Lethington, to whom Darnley had manifested hostility so bitter and determinate as to refuse to breathe the same air with him,

[1] Robertson, Hist. Scot. M. Mignet, Life of Mary Stuart. Buchanan has even the hardihood to assert, as the sequel to his misrepresentations about the time and manner of her journey to Hermitage Castle, that she caused Bothwell to be removed from thence to apartments immediately below her own in the house she occupied at Jedburgh, and that her illness was occasioned by the fatigue and loss of rest she endured in nursing him. This wilful falsehood, which he put forth, in the first instance, in his foul political libel, entitled "The Detection of the Doings of Marie Queen of Scots," in language too coarse to admit of quotation, he shamed not to repeat several years later in his History of Scotland. Yet nothing could be more public than the fact that Mary's illness attacked her October 17, the very morning after her return to Jedburgh, and in the course of a few hours brought her to the brink of the grave, and that Bothwell arrived at Jedburgh, while she lay between life and death, to assist at the Council that was holden at Jedburgh on the 25th of that month.

[2] Sloane MS., Brit. Museum, 3199, fol. 141. [3] Ibid.

or to hold either regal or conjugal companionship with the Queen as long as she persisted in retaining him as her Secretary, should exert all his subtlety to impress on her faithful friends the expediency of freeing her from her inimical consort, no one ought to wonder, for it was a measure of self-defence on the part of one of the most unscrupulous diplomatists of that age. It was by the same species of logic, probably, that he tempted the rash vain-glorious Bothwell into becoming the instrument of the deep debt of vengeance Darnley's uncompromising animosity had incurred. But Mary had shown no desire to release herself from the solemn tie which bound her to her uneasy yoke-fellow; on the contrary, she had only a few days previously earnestly protested against his abandoning her, promising, with tearful earnestness, "to alter anything in her conduct that might have given him cause of offence, if he would but name it." He had declared the fault was not in her; yet, as the most painful blow he could inflict on a fond woman, he had left with the threat "that she should not see his face for a long time."[1] He had contumaciously withdrawn himself from her society, not she from his. Compelled reluctantly to proceed on her judicial progress to the southern counties unsupported by his presence, Mary had left their mutual friend and confidant, Du Croc, to use his best endeavours to effect a reconciliation, requesting him to follow her to Jedburgh after he should have conferred with her wayward consort.[2] But as the interview between Du Croc and Darnley unfortunately took place in the presence of Lennox, the remonstrances and persuasions of the venerable mediator proved unavailing. Darnley returned with his father to Glasgow to nourish his sullen displeasure; and though he was induced to give up his frantic purpose of embarking in the vessel he had provided for his departure from Scotland, he manifested his intention of resolutely absenting himself from his royal wife, and continued to keep his bark in readiness for his

[1] See vol. iv., Lives of the Queens of Scotland. Letter of the Privy Council—in Keith, 347.

[2] Letter of Du Croc to Archbishop Beton, October 15, 1566—in Keith.

voyage. It must be obvious to every one, that, although the Queen had condescended to tears and entreaties to prevail on her husband not to go, it would have been the easiest thing in the world for her to have laid an embargo both on his vessel and himself, if he had attempted to put out to sea.

On the 15th of October, Mary had seen Du Croc, and learned the ill-success of his conference with her husband. "I came hither to Jedburgh," writes that statesman to Mary's confidential friend and representative at the Court of France, "on purpose to signify to the Queen what the King had spoken to me, and what I had said to him."[1] The report was not of a nature to soothe her wounded spirit after the fortnight of anxious suspense, mental disquiet, and personal fatigue she had gone through since her consort's petulant departure from Holyrood. The performance of her public duties rendered it necessary, in the mean time, for her to control her feelings, and veil the anguish of a breaking heart under a passionless exterior; for was she not compelled to maintain the dignity of a regal judge in her high court of judicature, where it would have ill beseemed her to indulge in the weakness of womanly weeping over her personal griefs?

Less delicate health than hers whose body at all times sympathised with the tone of her spirits, might have succumbed under the pressure of her private, yet all too public, cause of misery, combined with cares of State and difficult business. Yet, after all, the autumnal malaria of the undrained marshes of the wild tract of country through which she passed, in the evening air, on her return from Hermitage Castle to Jedburgh, might have more to do with inducing the malignant typhus which attacked her on the 17th of October, than the fever of ill-requited love or personal fatigue. Alarming symptoms appeared even the first day of her illness; delirium came on, followed by extreme prostration of strength. The malady being of an intermittent character, she was a little better on the morrow, which continued not long; and her sick-

[1] Postscript of Du Croc's Letter to Beton, Archbishop of Glasgow—Keith.

ness appearing to her to have a mortal tendency, she sent to all the kirks adjacent a request that she might be prayed for.[1] She expressed her willingness to resign her spirit to God, and directed that her body might be buried among her royal predecessors. She desired "God, of His mercy, to pardon her sins; to grant her a penitent and contrite heart; and that He would deal with her in compassion to her weakness, and not be extreme to mark what had been amiss in her, thanking Him for having given her time for repentance." Death-like swooning succeeded, and she appeared unconscious of everything around her. On the third day, recovering the use of speech and reason, but considering herself at the point of dissolution, she spake to those who were in attendance on her, and with a feeble voice, but serene countenance, told them "that she believed a few hours would remove her from this world to a better; and that, although she had been fond enough of life, she found it no hard thing to resign herself to death, acknowledging God as the Supreme Creator, and Lord of all things, and herself the work of His hands; desired His will to be accomplished in her, whether it pleased His Divine Majesty to suffer her to remain longer in this world, for the better governing of the people He had committed to her charge, or to take her to Himself."

Though Mary had requested the prayers of the Reformed congregations, she professed her adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, and repeated the Creed in Latin, in the presence of her nobles, whom she had summoned to receive her last commands. She exhorted them to unity of mind, peace, and quietness, observing "that by discord all good purposes were brought to nought, while by concord they were established." She "forgave all who had offended her, especially her own husband King Henry,[2] and also the banished noblemen who had so highly aggrieved her;" but required, "that in case they were brought back into the realm after her death, they should at least be debarred from access to the Prince her son."[3] Of that beloved infant, her only tie to life, she spake long and

[1] Historie of James the Sext. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

earnestly; and having sent for the French ambassador, Du Croc, to her bedside, she addressed him in these words: "Commend me to the King your master; tell him I hope he will protect my dear son, and also that he will grant one year of my dowry, after my death, to pay my debts and reward my faithful servants; but, above all, tell the Queen-mother that I heartily ask her forgiveness for any offence I may have either done, or been supposed to have committed, against her." She also recommended her son to the protection of the Queen of England, as his nearest kinswoman, and repeated her entreaties to her nobles to take care of him, praying them earnestly "not to suffer any to be in his company, in his tender youth, that were of evil natures, or likely to set him a bad example, but such only as could instruct him in virtue and godliness, and not to permit him to indulge any of the evil inclinations he might have inherited from either herself, his father, or any of his relations."[1] She recommended toleration in matters of religion to be observed after her death, as it had been to the utmost of her power during her life, declaring "that she had never persecuted one of her subjects on the score of religion; for," added she, in her pretty Scotch, "it is a sair thing, and a meikle prick, to any one to have the conscience pressed in sic a matter,"[2]—professing, however, her determination to die as she had lived in the faith she had been nourished and brought up in.

An official report of the illness of their royal mistress was made on the morning of the 23d October, to her ambassador at the Court of France, by the members of her Cabinet-council sojourning with her at Jedburgh. "Her Majesty," they write, "has been sick these six days bypast, and this night has had some *dwams* (fits) of swooning, which puts men in some fear; nevertheless, we see no tokens of death, and hope in God that He will shortly relieve her Majesty, and restore her to her health, and will not suffer this poor realm to fall in that misery to want so good

[1] Keith's Appendix. Historie of James the Sext. Mackenzie's Lives. Freebairn's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.

[2] Letter of Leslie, Bishop of Ross, to the Archbishop of Glasgow—Keith's Appendix.

and gracious a governor."[1] This letter is signed by the Earls of Huntley, Moray, and Atholl, and her Secretary of State. On the following day, Du Croc gives a favourable account of her symptoms. "We begin," he says, "to entertain better hopes of the Queen than we have done since she has amended, for now the physicians no longer despair. The fits of vomiting which attack her are troublesome, but the physicians are not dispirited about that, for she sleeps well and soundly. This last night she slept five hours without waking. I can assure you her Majesty is well taken care of, and God knows the Lords here are much occupied about her. You may imagine the trouble they would be in, and the distress there has been about it, in this poor realm."[2]

An unfavourable change took place on the evening of the 25th, and every one despaired of her recovery. She swooned, her sight failed, and her feet and legs became cold up to the knees. Friction and manipulation were resorted to by her French physician Charles Nau, were persisted in for upwards of four hours, and produced a temporary mitigation in these dangerous symptoms, till about six o'clock on the morning of the 26th, when she swooned again, and lay for dead—her limbs cold and rigid, her eyes closed, her mouth compressed, her feet and arms stiff, every one supposing the vital spark was fled. "Nevertheless," continues our authority,[3] "Maister Nau, who is a perfect man of his craft, would not give the matter over in that manner, but anew began to draw her knees, legs, arms, and feet with sic vehement torments, which lasted the space of three hours, till her Majesty recovered again her sight and speech, and got a great sweating, which was holden the relief of the sickness, because it was on the ninth day, which commonly is called the crisis of the sickness, and so here thought the cooling of the fever." Particulars no less interesting have been chronicled by her great adversary Knox, who records that, when Mary revived to consciousness from her long

[1] Keith's Appendix, p. 133. [2] Ibid.

[3] John Leslie, Bishop of Ross, to Beton, Archbishop of Glasgow, October 27, 1566—Keith's Appendix.

death-like swoon, "speaking very softly, she desired the Lords to pray for her to God. She said the Creed in English, and desired my Lord of Moray, if she should chance to depart, that he would not be over extreme to such as were of her religion. The Duke and he should have been Regents. The bruit went from Jedburgh, in the month of October, that the Queen was departed this life, or at least she could not live any time, wherefore there were continually prayers made at the Church of Edinburgh, and divers other places, for her conversion towards God and amendment. Many were of opinion that she should come to the preaching, and renounce Popery."[1]

The nobles who are especially named by Leslie as being present with her at this time, were the Earls of Moray, Huntley, Bothwell, Rothes, Caithness, and the Lords Livingstone, Seton, Yester, Borthwick, Arbroath, and Somerville, with many other barons and bishops. These all promised to remain together, and, in case of the Queen's death, to proceed to Edinburgh and make a Convention for opening and reading her will, and executing the same in case it should be found conformable to the laws of the realm; but if not, to appoint among themselves such for the governing the country, and keeping of the Prince, as should be judged according to the constitution of Scotland —a resolution that covertly intimated a determination to nullify the appointment of Darnley to the regency, in the event of its being found that the Queen had named him in her last testament as the natural guardian of his son.[2]

"The King all this time remains in Glasgow," continues Leslie, "and yet is not come toward the Queen's Majesty. The Queen is so weak in her person that she cannot be troubled with any business concerning the nuncio. Her Majesty wrote a despatch before she fell sick, but at this present may not be inquired thereof; and therefore it is good ye solicit the Cardinal of Lorraine to cause the nuncio to take patience." This letter was written late in the evening of the 26th. The next morning he adds: "The Queen's medicinar, Maister Nau, has wondrous good hope

[1] Knox's Hist. Ref. Scot., vol. ii. p. 535. [2] Keith's Appendix.

of her Grace's convalescence, in respect her Grace has passed this night without sickness, which was feared, by reason of her own conceit that she feared this Saturday to be the sickest of all. But I trust God of His infinite goodness, through the prayers of many made for her at this present, has preserved her to the advancement of His glory, and the comfort of the people committed to her care, whom I hope to be yet well governed for many years. Monsieur Du Croc, seeing the Queen's Grace's infirmities to have made her weak, has written to the ambassadors, that if they be not come forth from France yet, to remain still till he send word, or stay in London. My Lord Bothwell is here, who convalesces well of his wound; and there is good obedience and quietness upon the borders both of England and Scotland. I shall do diligence to collect the Queen's Grace's exhortations and latter declarations of her will, that so godly and virtuous sayings perish not."[1]

At this anxious period, while the shadow of death impended over the Queen, and a general feeling of loyal affection for her person, and value for her noble qualities, impelled the majority of her subjects, however divided in modes of faith, to unite in prayers that God would avert from the nation the calamity of losing her, the apparent apathy and neglect of her consort created the greatest astonishment and disgust. "The King is at Glasgow," wrote Du Croc to the Archbishop of Glasgow, "and has not been here. If he has been informed of it by any one, and has had time enough, if he had been willing to come, this is such a fault as I know not how to excuse."[2] But Darnley, who was hawking and hunting with his father in the west country, appears not to have been apprised of the dangerous illness of his royal wife till he arrived in Edinburgh on the 27th—the day on which the crisis of her

[1] Keith's Appendix.

[2] It is but justice to this unfortunate Prince to notice that Keith, not observing that Du Croc uses the subjunctive mood and conditional tense, has fallen into the error of translating Du Croc's remark on Darnley's neglect, "He has been informed by some one, and had sufficient time to come if he had been willing."

malady had taken a favourable turn. In consequence of his tardy appearance, when he presented himself at Jedburgh on the 28th he was received coldly, if indeed he were permitted to see the royal patient in her weak and precarious state. He thus suffered the penalty of his perverse violation of his duty in withdrawing himself to his father at Glasgow, instead of accompanying his wife and Sovereign on her progress; for Moray, Lethington, and her other ministers, to whom he had declared his unappeasable hostility, well knew how to take advantage of his impolitic conduct. Surrounded as the Queen was by his vindictive foes, it was scarcely to be expected that they would be diligent in sending to apprise him of her dangerous illness, if even they had known where to find him. A tender scene of reconciliation might have been the result, if the royal pair, who were estranged, but not indifferent to each other, had met under circumstances so well calculated to elicit a burst of impassioned penitence from the offending husband, and a renewal of fond affection on the part of the royal wife. Two alarming contingencies were averted by Darnley's absence at the moment when Mary was willing to exchange forgiveness with all who had ever injured her—his appointment to the guardianship of their infant son, in the anticipation of her death, or his restoration to his former unbounded influence over her councils in the event of her recovery. But Darnley was, with his usual misjudging petulance, playing the game most agreeable to his subtle adversaries—or rather, by estranging himself from the society of his royal consort, he had left the game in their hands. He had been amusing himself with his hawks and hounds at a time when he ought to have been watching beside her feverish bed, with the fond solicitude of conjugal affection. Angry with himself, doubtless, but too proud to acknowledge his fault, this wrong-headed Prince appears to have arrived at Jedburgh in one of his irritable moods, ready to give and take offence at everything, and with every one. The Queen was in the hands of the same junta whom he had vainly required her to expel from her palace of Holyrood on the 29th of the preceding month. No one, not

even himself, could in her present precarious state have access to her chamber without their permission. Her life, indeed, hung on a thread so fragile that the Earl of Moray and her other ministers would have been fully justified in preserving her from excitement and agitation, so dangerous in the first stage of convalescence, if they had not afterwards based one of their false accusations against their royal mistress on what, if true, must have been their doing, not hers — it being asserted in Moray's Journal that "the King visited her, and was repulsed."[1] Their literary organ, Buchanan, shamelessly states, in defiance of facts and dates, "that the King hasted in post to visit the Queen, to comfort her in her weakness, and, by all gentle services that he possibly could, to declare his affection and hearty desire to do her pleasure, but that neither lodgings were provided for him, nor the least thing done for his comfort; and the nobility and officers of the Court were forbidden to do him reverence, or to yield their lodgings to him, or even to harbour him for one night."[2] Nor is this all, for he pretends "that the Queen, suspecting that the Earl of Moray would show him courtesy, practised with his wife to feign herself sick, go home in haste and keep her bed, that at least by this colour the King might be shot out of doors."[3] Considering the terms on which Darnley and Moray stood, the attentions to be expected in that quarter were likely to be of a perilous nature. Lady Moray was a person, too, for whom Darnley had manifested an insuperable aversion, being jealous of the Queen's friendship for her,[4] so that her returning to her own home—rather a long journey for a sick lady, by the by, from Jedburgh to St Andrews, or even to Edinburgh—so far from being the means "of shooting him out of doors," would have removed one of his objections to coming within them, especially if her husband departed with her. It is possible, however, as Buchanan generally based his fictions on some fact which his suborners required him to distort into a malignant imputation on Queen Mary,

[1] Anderson's Collections.
[2] Detection of the Doings of Mary Queen of Scots, by George Buchanan. See also his History of Scotland. [3] Ibid.
[4] Advices out of Scotland. Bedford to Cecil—State Paper Office MS.

that Lady Moray might really have been ill of the same malady as her royal mistress, which Leslie describes as "a burning corrupted fever," apparently a malignant intermittent typhus, accompanied with choleretic symptoms, cramps, and collapse, and of course highly infectious. Or it may have been that the Morays were in possession of the only apartments in the small over-crowded house occupied by the Queen in Jedburgh that Darnley considered worthy of his use, and that Moray, whose policy it was to keep the royal pair asunder, made his wife feign herself sick, as a pretext for not resigning them.

Du Croc, in his touching picture of the sorely harassed Queen's subsequent illness and dejection, says: "The King her husband came to visit her at Jedburgh. He remained there but one night, but yet in that short time I had a great deal of conversation with him." The purport of this the venerable statesman does not explain; but it certainly does not appear to have increased his respect for this wayward and misjudging Prince.

The house in which Darnley and his attendants lodged during his brief sojourn in Jedburgh belonged to Lord Home, and is affirmed by local tradition to be the antique mansion in the High Street, next the Eagle Hotel. It has a stone turnpike stair from the top of the house to the bottom, with other features denoting it to have been, at that time, one of those domestic fortalices, called in Scotch phraseology a bastel. That where the Queen lay during the dangerous fever which had nearly terminated her troublous pilgrimage in the morning of her days, is still habitable. It is a square turreted house, strongly built, but roofed with thatch. An ancient arched portal has been walled up, which was probably the grand entrance in those days. It has a fine spiral stone staircase, which ascends to a small apartment in the turret, said to be that where she slept.[1] The spacious suite of apartments on the opposite side of the staircase, one of which still bears the name of

[1] The bed occupied by her has been removed within the memory of man, and is now at Abbotsford, having been purchased by a gentleman of the name of Winthrop, and presented to Sir Walter Scott.

the Guard-room, is more likely to have been occupied by royalty as ante-room, privy chamber, and bedroom. The only relic of Mary's abode is a large piece of ancient tapestry hangings, wrought by the needle, representing the meeting between Jacob and Esau. It is soiled and faded, but the figures are well delineated, and the colours have been very fine, royal blue being the prevailing tint of the garments of the principal figures. Rachel holds her little son Joseph by the hand, while the brothers are embracing. The border which surrounds the tableau is very rich. The garden-ground behind the house extends to the banks of the river Jed, close to the old picturesque bridge. The site of this ancient abode gained its present name of Queen Street in memory of Mary's temporary residence.

Forty pounds were paid by Queen Mary to the Lady Fernyhirst, for the use of the house she had occupied during the thirty days she abode at Jedburgh.[1] That her Majesty was occasionally soothed with music during her sickness appears from the reward of forty shillings being accorded to John Hume, player on the lute, and four pounds to James Heron, player on the pipe and *quhissil.* The sum of three pounds thirteen shillings was disbursed by the keeper of her privy purse "for drugs, twenty apples and pomegranates, and six citrons brought forth of Edinburgh to Jedburgh to the Queen's Grace, her Majesty being sick for the time."[2] From the same source we learn that the first use Queen Mary made of her convalescence was to cause twenty pounds to be distributed among the poor of Jedburgh, as a thank-offering to God for her recovery from her dangerous and painful illness.[3] This disbursement was made October 30. The same day we observe she directed a warrant to her Lord-Treasurer, which bears this quaint heading, "An abuilziment to the Queen's Grace in Jedburgh," being an order for the materials for a new dress, for which the royal convalescent appears to have been in a very great hurry, if

[1] Treasurer's Accounts, Royal Records, General Register House, Edinburgh. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

we may judge from the exhortation with which she prefaces her requisition: "Thesaurer,—After the sight of this writ ye shall not fail to send a servant of your own, in all possible haste to Edinburgh, and cause him to bring to this town twenty ells red champit chamlet of silk, with twenty ells white plaiding [royal Stuart plaid], four ells of black taffaty, three ells fine black velvet, four ells small Lyons canvas, six ounces of black silk, two ells black buckram, six ounces black stitching-silk, with a pound of black thread. This on no ways ye shall fail to do, keeping this writ for your warrant. Subscribed with our hand at Jedburgh, the penult day of October, 1566. Marie R."[1]

It is a curious study to trace the feminine propensity which happily enabled the fair young Sovereign to divert her sad thoughts from the tragic excitement of her position, by entering into the minutiæ of the items required for her new dress, even to the stitching-silk and black thread with which it was to be put together; but far more pleasing to be able to record to her honour the unwonted fact of a royal assize at Jedburgh, terminating without a single execution, although her authority on the Border had been resisted, and her Lord-lieutenant almost slain—circumstances which, if Mary Stuart had been of the vindictive and cruel disposition imputed to her by Knox and Buchanan, could scarcely have failed to have provoked very sanguinary proceedings in the justice courts where she presided. She acted, however, in conformity with the clemency of her disposition, and showed her womanly tenderness for human life by merely inflicting fines on the offenders who came under her gentle jurisdiction, instead of shedding blood.[2]

It is asserted in the false journal subsequently exhibited by Moray and his confederates at the English Court, for the purpose of defaming her, that on the 5th of November "the

[1] Treasury Accounts, General Register House, Edinburgh, inedited.

[2] Sir John Forster to Cecil, October 1566. Border Correspondence—State Paper MSS. The payments accorded by Queen Mary to her great law-officers on this occasion were, we find, three pounds a-day to the Justice-General, and to Sir John Bellenden, the Justice-Clerk, for his ordinar and clerks remaining at the Airs of Jedburgh, from the 9th day of October to the 8th of November, forty shillings per day.—Treasury Accounts, General Register House, Edinburgh.

Queen and Bothwell came to Kelso, and there abode two nights." Yet the official records prove that Moray and Bothwell both assisted, with their colleagues, at a privy council that was holden at Jedburgh on that very day, in which several private causes were decided.[1] She did not leave Jedburgh till four days later, when, finding herself sufficiently recovered to travel, she proceeded on her royal progress to Kelso, November 9, accompanied by the Earl of Moray and the other members of her Council. Bothwell was also in attendance, according to his bounden duty, both as the Lord-Warden of the Borders and Sheriff of the three counties through which her route lay, and also by reason of the tenure of his lands, as the principal tenant of the Crown and the most considerable feudal inheritor in that district.[2] Notwithstanding these facts, and the pompous publicity of her regal, judicial, and military progress —for she was escorted by a thousand horsemen, as the official reports of Sir William Forster to Cecil certify[3]— the journal, fabricated and put forth only two years later by the very men who were in her train, mentions Bothwell as her sole companion, except Lady Reres, whom they pretend was taken by the watch at Coldingham on the 10th of November.[4] But even if the latter assertion had any foundation as regards Lady Reres, it could not affect the reputation of the Queen, whom the records of her Privy Council prove to have been at Kelso that day, nor did she come to Coldingham till the 16th of the month.[5] One thing is certain, that if Mary had been guilty of the crimes imputed to her, and as shamelessly regardless, not only of the etiquettes of royalty, but of the decencies of womanhood, as her libellers pretend,[6] there would have been no occasion for the absurd series of fictions to which they have resorted for the purpose of defaming her, by misrepresenting her

[1] Privy Council Register, November 5, 1566. Chalmers.
[2] Chalmers. Goodall.
[3] Border Correspondence—State Paper Office MSS.
[4] Anderson's Collections. Buchanan's Detection.
[5] Forster to Cecil.
[6] See Buchanan's Detection, p. 12. Anderson's Collections.

proceedings during this progress. Witnesses enow might have been brought forward from among her lords-in-waiting and bedchamber-women, or even their servants, if she had thus forgotten herself; but it was because there were no facts of the kind to elicit that the black arts of falsehood and forgery were employed against her.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXVI.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary at Kelso—She receives letters from Darnley—Their distressing effect—Her stately progress through Liddesdale—She desires to see Berwick—Met at the Bound Road by the English authorities—Her conversation with the Deputy-Governor, Sir John Forster—Conducted by him and his company to Halidon Hill—Honours paid to Queen Mary by the town of Berwick—She is hurt by Sir John Forster's horse—Her courage and courteous behaviour—Ill from the effects of the accident—Her equestrian dress—Particulars of her wardrobe and costume—Her lodgings at Coldingham—She arrives at Dunbar—Writes to Queen Elizabeth's Privy Council about the English succession—She comes to Craigmillar Castle—Receives the French ambassador—Rejoined by Darnley there—Things go worse and worse between them—Mary's illness and dejection—Her desire of death—Plots of her ministers against Darnley—Their secret intelligence with Morton—Archibald Douglas's disclosures of their proceedings—Darnley leaves the Queen in anger—Moray and Lethington urge her to divorce him—She resists their temptations—Will not stain her honour—Her ministers determine on his death—They draw a secret bond for his murder—Their reasons for not slaying him at Craigmillar Castle.

WHILE at Kelso, Queen Mary received letters from Darnley, in the presence of those inimical observers, Moray and Lethington. She did not communicate the contents, but that they were of a nature calculated to distress her very poignantly may be surmised from the agitating effect they produced both on her mind and body, for she cast a piteous look when she had read them, and appeared in danger of relapsing into her recent sickness, expressed a passionate desire of death, and even suffered herself to be transported into the sinful exclamation, "that rather than

live to endure such sorrow she would slay herself;" with other bitter and impatient words, if we may believe Buchanan and his informers, on whose credibility the incident rests.[1]

Mary left Kelso November 10, and slept that night and the next at Home Castle, visiting Wark on her way. She rested on the nights of the 12th, 13th, and 14th at Cowdenknows, Langton, and Wedderburn.[2] At the latter place, precisely at the time the journal subsequently fabricated by her brother Moray and his confederates, for her defamation, asserts that she was sojourning alone with Bothwell at Dunbar Castle, she took a sudden resolution to go in state to visit the English boundary. Queen Mary was accompanied on this occasion by Moray himself, and the rest of her ministers, and attended, as a matter of course, by Bothwell as her Lord-lieutenant, Lord Hume, and the other Wardens of the Border,[3] and an escort so numerous that Sir John Forster, the English deputy-governor, to whom she had sent notice of her approach, considered it prudent to take precautionary measures for the defence of Queen Elizabeth's good town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, by having the artillery mounted, the walls manned, and the gates secured, before he and his colleagues ventured to go forth to meet and salute the fair North British Sovereign at the Bound Road—evidently in some alarm lest, in spite of her friendly message, she had hostile intentions. The details afford so characteristic a picture of the manners of the times that they must be related in his own words: "My Lord of Moray yesterday morning sent me word that the Queen his Sovereign was to pass to Coldingham, and in her way desired to pass through some part of the Bounds. Whereupon I gave order to the Master of the Ordnance to prepare in readiness the great ordnance, and left him and certain captains in the town, and took with me to the number of forty

[1] Detection of the Doings of Mary Queen of Scots. Anderson's Col.
[2] Lethington's Letter, quoted in Keith and Chalmers.
[3] Lethington's Letter to Archbishop Beton, printed in Keith. See also Border Correspondence.

horsemen, and caused the gates to be locked after me, and suffered none else to depart out of the town, and gave order that all the soldiers should be on the old walls with armour and weapon, to the utmost show that could be; and so rode to the Bound Road and met the Queen, accompanied with my Lord of Moray, the Earl Huntley, the Earl Bothwell, the Secretary, and the Lord Hume, with the number of five hundred horse. At our first meeting she said, 'I am thus bold upon my good sister's favour to enter into her bounds, not meaning anyway to offend her nor any subject of hers.'"[1]

After a suitable exchange of compliments from the governor, "for then," observes Sir James Melville, who was also present, "all England bore her Majesty great reverence,"[2] Mary expressed a wish to behold Berwick in the distance; and the English gentlemen, proud to oblige their royal neighbour, conducted her to Halidon Hill. She made Sir John Forster ride by her side, and honoured him with much discourse, observing, "There has been much cumber between these realms, but never during my life will I give occasion for any wars to England." "After this, and other pleasant talk," continues Forster,[3] "she said 'she had something to say to me touching the Earl of Morton, that I should be a favourer of him and his company.' I answered her Majesty, 'that, until I had received direction from the Queen's Majesty, my mistress, for their passing away out of this realm, I had used them friendly; but so soon as the Queen my mistress had commanded me to avoid them, I had after no dealings with them: for I mean not to have my mistress's indignation for any subject you have;' adding, 'I trust your Majesty hath that opinion of me that I make more estimation of your favour than of any subject you have.'" Mary appeared very well pleased with this discreet answer, and pursued the theme no further. "I had great discourse of our Border matters," continues Forster, "and

[1] Sir John Forster to Sir W. Cecil, 16th November 1566. Border Correspondence—State Paper MS., inedited.
[2] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[3] Letter to Cecil, November 16, 1566—Border Correspondence, inedited.

then she called my Lord Bothwell, the Laird of Cessford, and the Lord Hume, and gave straight commandment, in my hearing, 'to cause good rule to be kept; and if she heard by me that the same were not kept, her officers should repent it;' with very earnest words, 'that she would do all things that might continue the peace.'"[1]

When Queen Mary reached the summit of Halidon Hill, she was saluted by a royal *feu-de-joie* from all the guns at Berwick,[2] and beheld not only that town, but a far-off prospect of the land she fondly hoped one day to call her own. A proud moment it doubtless must have been, as she sat gazing across the broad waters of the Tweed, surrounded by the admiring gentlemen of England who had conducted her to that spot. And here an accident of a very alarming and painful nature befel her; for, as she was conversing earnestly with Sir John Forster, his fiery charger reared up, and in coming down struck her above the knee with his fore-feet, and hurt her grievously. Few ladies but would have screamed or fainted, but Mary, though still feeble from her recent severe illness, had sufficient fortitude and self-control to preserve her composure and conceal her pain. Sir John Forster, far more disconcerted at this unlucky occurrence than she, sprang from his horse in great distress, and knelt to entreat her pardon. Mary bade him rise, and kindly said "she was not hurt,"[3]—exerting all her firmness with right royal spirit to control her pain while preforming the ceremonial courtesies of taking leave of the English gentlemen, and returning thanks for the honours that had been paid to her. She requested Sir John Forster to "make her commendations to the Queen of England, her good sister, and to tell her Majesty, in his next letters, how she had presumed on her friendship;" and so she parted, not forgetting, however, to send six-score French crowns as a reward to the gunners of Berwick.[4] Sir James Melville, who was an eyewitness of the accident that befell his Sovereign, says, "she was very evil hurt, and compelled, in

[1] Letter to Cecil, November 16, 1566—Border Correspondence, inedited.
[2] Ibid. Carr's History of Coldingham. [3] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[4] Forster to Cecil, Nov. 16—State Paper Office MS.

consequence, to stop two days on her journey at a castle of Lord Home," instead of going on to Coldingham that evening as she had purposed. When sufficiently recovered to proceed to Coldingham, she slept not in the Priory, but in Houndwood, the Prior's castellated house, where a small apartment is pointed out to visitors as "Queen Mary's room." The spot where she mounted her white palfrey obtained, in commemoration of that circumstance, the name of Mount Album, which it still bears.[1]

A portrait of Queen Mary, mounted on her white palfrey, is in the possession of the Baroness Braye, which, although painted by an artist who certainly did not possess the power of depicting female grace and beauty, is curious, as affording a specimen of her equestrian dress on state occasions. She is almost as much loaded with jewels and gold embroidery as her good sister of England, and is dressed in the like fashion, only her ruff is of less imposing height and amplitude. Her palfrey is trapped with purple velvet, and cut out in lattice shells, on which are worked a net of pearl beads; the bridle and head-gear are richly jewelled, and ornamented with pearls and bands of ribbon.

Among the items in Queen Mary's wardrobe inventory we observe "ane little hat of black taffety, embroidered all over with gold, with a black feather and gold band. Another hat of black taffety, embroidered with silver, one of black velvet, embroidered with silver, and one of white *crisp* [crape]; also a little grey felt hat, embroidered with gold and red silk, with a feather of red and yellow," the royal colours of Scotland.[2] These belonged to her riding-tire; but she had also a rich variety of hoods, coifs, cauls, bonnets, and cornettes of velvet, silk, damask, crape, and other costly materials, embroidered with gold, silver, silk, and pearls: with these she wore her regal frontlet of jeweller's work and gems. Her veils were for the most part of crape, passamented with borders of gold, embroidery,

[1] Alexander Allan Carr's History of Coldingham.

[2] Royal Wardrobe Account, edited and privately printed by the late T. Thompson, Esq., of Shrubhill, Leith.

and pearls. The following quaintly described article of Oriental luxury in Mary's wardrobe inventory appears to have been an anticipation of the modern parasol, for defending her face from the too ardent rays of the sun: "A little canopy of cramoisy satin, of three-quarters long, furnished with fringes and *fassis*[1] made of gold and cramoisin silk, with many little painted buttons, serving to bear shadow afore the Queen." Another of these fanciful hand-canopies was made of silver damask and carnation silk, fringed with carnation and silver. She had six-and-thirty pairs of velvet shoes, laced and passamented with gold and silver, besides *mulis* or slippers in great variety. Her gloves were of the gauntlet form, fringed and embroidered with gold, silver, coloured silks, and small pearls. Her hose were silk, stocked with gold or silver; but she did not disdain the use of Guernsey *worsett* for winter wear. She had short cloaks of black velvet, embroidered with silver, and of white satin, embroidered and fringed with gold; a Highland mantle of black frieze, passamented with gold, and lined with black taffety; a blue Highland mantle and a white Highland mantle. Her gowns, *vaskinis*,[2] skirts, sleeves, doublets, and vardingales were very costly, but not so numerous as those of her good sister of England, who rejoiced in the possession of two thousand magnificent dresses. Mary Stuart's wardrobe contained but fifty, of surpassing richness and elegance. The first in her inventory is "a robe-royal of purple velvet, embroidered about with gold and furred with spotted ermine. A long loose gown, white satin, the breasts thereof lined with a breadth of cloth-of-silver, and passamented about with a broad passament of silver. A loose gown of crammosie satin, *lang-tailit*, lined in the breasts with frosted cloth-of-gold, with a broad band of gold about the same. Ane *high-neckit lang-tailit* gown of thin *incarnit* [carnation-coloured] taffety, with long and short sleeves, passamented over the body with silver passaments,

[1] *Fassis*—knots, bunches.

[2] This article of dress, more properly spelt *vasquina*, is the same as the *basquina* or jacket worn in modern dress: a pourpoint or vest was often worn with it by Queen Mary.

and small cordons of silver and blue silk."[1] This dress, from the lightness of the material, was evidently for summer wear. She had also a lang-tailed gown of *layn* (woollen manufacture), *sewit* (meaning embroidered) with silver and white silk, *laich-neckit*, with *burlettes*—that is to say, made low in the boddice, trimmed with stuffed rolls of the same material. A white satin lang-tailed high-neckit gown, passamented all over with gold; one of blue damask, passamented all over with silver; one of *aurange* damask, with silver; one of cloth-of-silver, frosted with gold on green velvet; another of cloth-of-gold, embroidered with silver, grounded with purple satin, made low in the boddice, and trimmed with a *geit*, or edging lace, of gold.[2]

It must be remembered that, with the exception of the nineteen months and ten days of her public married life with Darnley, and one month of forced and joyless union with Bothwell, Mary Stuart wore widow's mourning during her seven years' personal reign in Scotland. Hence her Scotch portraits represent her, with few exceptions, either in the dule-weed, or black trimmed with white. There is, however, a fine old portrait of her in the Bishop's palace at Gloucester, erroneously stated, in an inscription of more modern date, to be Queen Elizabeth, the person by whom that inscription has been added having been deceived by the costume and family resemblance into that mistake. But the perfect oval of the face, pouting lips, long straight nose, almond-shaped dark hazel eyes, chestnut hair and eyebrows, delicate brunette complexion, and slender elegant throat, are those of Mary. The melancholy expression—true mark of a royal Stuart—which pervades her countenance, well accords with the state of her mind at the joyless period when she wore her gayest colours and most elaborate decorations, as if the royal purple and the gems could hide the anguish of a breaking heart. Among other little traits which serve to identify this portrait as that of Mary Stuart, is the crown of Scotland surmounting a crowned ruby

[1] Royal Wardrobe Account, edited and privately printed by the late T. Thompson, Esq., of Shrubhill, Leith. [2] Ibid.

heart—the cognisance of Darnley's maternal ancestors of the house of Douglas, whose representative in the elder line, through his mother, Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, he claimed to be. This jewelled device, which forms the centre of the pretty circular fan of yellow ostrich-feathers, tipped with red, which Mary holds in her right hand, was probably a token from that lady, denoting the matrimonial connection between the Sovereign of Scotland and the grandson of the house of Douglas. But it is certain that Queen Elizabeth would not have condescended to use the cognisance of a Scottish subject among her decorations, and that she never pretended to have the slightest claim to the regal diadem of Scotland, although Mary had assumed the royal arms and title of Queen of England when under the tutelage of her father-in-law, Henry II. of France.

On the subject of her formal recognition as presumptive heiress of the crown of England, Mary was scarcely sane—ambition, not love, being the master-passion of her soul. On reaching Dunbar Castle, November 18th, she was actually guilty of the imprudence of addressing a letter to the Privy Council of Elizabeth, requesting their good offices, both with their royal mistress and the Parliament of England,[1] that justice might be done to her in that matter—a proceeding above all others calculated to offend and irritate a princess of Elizabeth's haughty and jealous temper. But Mary's party in England had been so materially strengthened by the birth of her son, and the respect created by her mild and equitable sway in her own realm, her liberal policy in regard to religion, and the courageous spirit with which she had acted in times of difficulty and danger, that she had received confident assurances of a triumphant majority, if she would submit her claims on the regal succession to the decision of the English Parliament.[2] Meantime Elizabeth complained to Mary that a book had been written, giving her infant son the lofty titles of James, Prince of Scotland, England, Ireland, and France. Mary denied having the slightest knowledge of the author, or any share in the indiscreet assumption of such titles for the Prince her son,

[1] Labanoff, Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart. [2] Lingard. Tytler.

adding, "that it was impossible for her to be answerable for such follies as might be committed by unknown persons, who chose to write books about either herself or her son;"[1] and complained, in her turn, "that a book had recently been put forth, very prejudicial to her just title to the royal succession of England."

While at Dunbar, Queen Mary visited Tantallon Castle, which, ever since the overt act of treason of which Morton had been guilty, had been held in the joint names of herself and her consort, the rightful claimant of the Douglas patrimony, by Robert Lauder, the son of the Laird of Bass[2]—sufficient reason, if there had been none other, for Morton's murderous designs against the life of Darnley. The Queen reached Craigmillar Castle on the 20th of November, and the next day held a Court there, to give a state reception to the French ambassador-extraordinary, the Count de Brienne, to whom the honour of representing his Sovereign, Charles IX., as the godfather of the infant heir of Scotland, had been assigned.[3]

Mary was rejoined by her truant husband at Craigmillar Castle on the 26th of November, and he tarried with her till the 4th of December.[4] But as he came not in a conciliatory spirit, and her heart was still sore from the wounds his treachery, unkindness, and neglect had inflicted, his visit, instead of producing a reconciliation, appears to have aggravated their previous misunderstanding. Some allowance ought, however, to be made for the very natural annoyance betrayed by the irritable Darnley on meeting his royal wife at Craigmillar, as he had left her at Holyrood and at Jedburgh, in the hands of her false brother and his confederates—men who had plotted against both their lives, and succeeded in persuading her to exclude him from any share

[1] State Paper Office MS. [2] Diurnal of Occurrents. Chalmers.

[3] This nobleman had arrived in Scotland while the Queen was absent on her progress, but was received with all due demonstrations of respect by the gentlemen of Lothian, and escorted by them as far as Inchbacklin Brae, where he was met by the Lord Provost and civil authorities of Edinburgh, who, with Sir James Balfour, convoyed him to his lodgings, in Henry Kinloch's house, beside Holyrood Abbey, where he was entertained till the Queen's return.

[4] Letter of Du Croc to the Archbishop of Glasgow—Keith's Preface.

in the government of her realm. Too proud to dissemble his resentment, too angry to endeavour to recover his former influence, by resuming the endearing deportment of a lover, he behaved with obdurate sullenness, and rendered her unspeakably wretched. Du Croc, the mutual confidant of the royal pair, in his letter to Mary's faithful servant Beton, Archbishop of Glasgow, gives a pathetic account of the languishing health and morbid depression of spirits into which she had sunk at this period: "The Queen is for the present at Craigmillar, about a league distant from this city [Edinburgh]. She is in the hands of the physicians, and I do assure you is not at all well. I do believe the principal part of her disease to consist of a deep grief and sorrow; nor does it seem possible to make her forget the same. Still she repeats these words, 'I could wish to be dead.'"[1] In the irrepressible anguish of her heart, she was heard to regret that she had been so unhappy as to recover from her late dangerous illness at Jedburgh.

Darnley, meantime, whose restless irritability was of course increased by the fatal habit of intemperance he had acquired in Scotland, requested Du Croc to meet him about half a league from Edinburgh. The particulars of that conference are not detailed by Du Croc to his diplomatic correspondent beyond the confidential hint that "matters were going on worse and worse between the royal pair, and that, unless through the especial intervention of God, no good understanding would be likely to take place, for Darnley would never humble himself as he ought, and the Queen could not see him in conference with any of her nobles without suspecting there was a plot between them."[2] It must be acknowledged that she had had too painful cause for her distrust of him, in whom she ought to have found her best protector and most faithful counsellor. Darnley had cause for suspicion also,

[1] How Monsieur Mignet, or any other defamatory historian of Mary Stuart, could construe this pathetic expression of her own weariness of the intolerable burden of life and regal care into a malignant intimation of her desire of her husband's murder, can only be accounted for by the obliquity of prejudice which has betrayed that gentleman into the fallacy of misquoting authentic evidences in her favour.

[2] Lingard's History of England. Fragment of Du Croc's Letter to Archbishop Beton, printed in Keith's Preface.

but not from her whose generous love had made him the partner of her throne, and whose worldly interests were so linked with his, that for her to have practised against his life would have been an act of suicidal madness, as well as a crime incompatible with her tender and forgiving nature. A conspiracy was, nevertheless, progressing against Darnley's life under the same roof with him and the Queen, in which her Prime Minister, her Secretary of State, with other members of her Cabinet, were implicated, and many of her nobles secretly engaged. The question has frequently been debated, whether this could have been carried on without the Queen's cognisance and sanction. It is merely necessary for her justification to call attention to the facts disclosed, sixteen years later, by one of the actual murderers, Archibald Douglas of Whittinghame, in a letter addressed to herself, in reply to her promise of befriending him, provided he could clear himself of being accessory to that crime. "Please your Majesty," writes he,[1] "I received your letter of the 12th of November, and in like manner has seen some part of the contents of one of the same date, directed to Monsieur Mauvissière, ambassador for his Majesty the most Christian King, both which are agreeable to your princely dignity. As by the one your Majesty desires to know the true cause of my banishment, and offers unto me all 'favour *if* I shall be found innocent of the heinous facts committed on the person of your husband of good memory;' so by the other the said ambassador is willed to declare unto me, 'if your husband's murder could be laid justly against me, that you could not solicit in my cause, neither yet for any person that was participant of that execrable fact, but would seek the revenge thereof when you should have any means.'"[2] If Mary had been herself a

[1] Letter of Archibald Douglas to Queen Mary, 1583—Harl. Lib. Printed in Robertson's Appendix.

[2] This remarkable correspondence between Mary Stuart and Archibald Douglas commenced in the autumn of the year 1583, in consequence of the French ambassador at the Court of England, Mauvissière de Castelnau, who, for some reason, had always patronised him, urging her to employ and trust him as a secret agent who could do more for her cause in Scotland than any other person. Mauvissière also recommended Nau, the Queen's Secretary, to use his influence with his royal mistress for that purpose,

party to the crime, or, as her enemies assert, the contriver and instigator of it, she would not have dared to write thus to one whose guilt must, in that case, have been known to her, and hers to him. Douglas would then have been in a position to demand hush-money of Mary, and impose conditions as the price of secresy, instead of humbly supplicating her favour, and proffering his political services if she would condescend to accept them. Mauvissière, the French ambassador, strongly advised her to do so, observing "that it was in the power of Archibald Douglas to be of great use to her." But Mary, with the boldness of conscious integrity, answers, "that she will have nought to do with him, unless he can clear himself of the suspicion of having participated in her husband's murder." There would have been neither ceremonies nor refinements observed between persons united in the degrading fellowship of crime. Instead of replying with a scornful retort, he pleads innocence of everything but foreknowledge of the design; and in order to persuade her of this, enters into explanations, which prove that she was as much in ignorance of the conspiracy of her Ministers for the destruction of her husband, as she had been of that for the assassination of her unfortunate Secretary, David Riccio, by the same people.

Now, mark his words with due attention, for they were neither extorted by the Scottish boot nor the English rack; but voluntarily and deliberately penned, in a private letter,

observing that "Archibald Douglas had deeply repented of having been induced by Morton to act against her, and was now fully disposed to repair his former offences." After reiterated instances of the kind, the captive Queen wrote in reply to Mauvissière: "As to Archibald Douglas, I think that he, having acknowledged his duty to me, both in his letters to myself and by word of mouth to you, would not act contrary to his professions. I would therefore gladly serve him to my power, and replace him in my son's favour, by making a request for him to be recalled to Scotland, having, as you know, no other means of writing there. You must, however, ascertain the cause of his banishment, for if he have been in any way implicated in the death of the late King my husband, I will never intercede for him nor any other who shall have been culpable therein, not wishing to give my enemies cause to colour, by my dealings with him, their wicked and malicious calumnies against me."—Additions to the Memoirs of M. Castelnau de Mauvissière, by La Laboureur, in Jebb's Collections.

to Mary Stuart; then ask if ever instigator of a crime were thus addressed by an accomplice:—

"Your Majesty's offer, if I be innocent of the crime, is most favourable, and your desire to know the truth of the same is most equitable, and therefore that I should with all my simplicity, sincerity, and truth, answer thereunto is most reasonable, to the end that your princely dignity may be my help, if my innocence shall sufficiently appear, and procure my condemnation if I be culpable in any matter, except in the knowledge of the evil-disposed minds of the most part of your nobility against your said husband, and not revealing it, which I am assured was sufficiently known to himself and to all that had judgment never so little in that realm, which also I was constrained to understand, as he that was specially employed betwixt the Earl of Morton and a good number of your nobility, that they might with all humility intercede at your Majesty's hand for his (Morton's) relief in such matters as are more especially contained in the declaration following, which I am constrained, for my own justification by this letter, to call to your Majesty's remembrance, notwithstanding that I am assured to my grief the reading thereof will not smally offend your princely mind."

How elegantly the plausible villain writes! No ruffling baron he, rude and unlettered, but bred and ordained a priest in the Church of Rome, versed in her learning and persuasive eloquence: changing with the time, he had renounced the restraints and trouble of his office, but kept his rich benefice and ecclesiastical title of Parson Douglas till he obtained, through the kind favour of his patron, and employer in Darnley's murder, the Regent Morton, to reward him for his personal assistance in that deed, the more imposing dignity of a Lord of Session—in plain English, a judge holding pre-eminent rank above his brethren of the bench. He had married, moreover, the widow of the Queen's illegitimate brother, the Lord John of Coldingham, who ought to have known somewhat of the private conduct of her royal mistress, being her principal lady-in-waiting, and the Earl of Bothwell's sister: if, therefore, Mary had been really implicated in the crimes of which she has been accused, Archibald Douglas must have been in possession of every circumstance tending to prove her guilt.

Can there be evidence in Mary's favour stronger than the fact that a man so thoroughly acquainted with the ins and outs of the conspiracy against Darnley's life, its authors and abettors from its very first commencement,[1]

[1] See Morton's Confession in the Appendix of Bannatyne's Memorials.

of which no one consenting to the crime could be supposed ignorant, should, sixteen years after its cruel object had been accomplished, unfold the black mysteries of its preliminaries to herself, in the respectful, nay, reverential and delicate, language due to an innocent person? "It may please your Majesty to remember," he continues, "that in the year 1566 the said Earl of Morton, with divers other nobility and gents, were declared rebels to your Majesty, and banished your realm for insolent murder committed in your Majesty's own chamber, which they alleged was done by command of your husband, who, notwithstanding, affirmed that he was compelled by them to subscribe the warrant given for that effect.[1] Howsoever the truth of that matter remains among them, it appertains not to me at this time to be curious. True it is that I was one of that number that heavily offended against your Majesty, and passed in France the time of our banishment, at the desire of the rest, to pray your brother, the most Christian King, to intercede that our offences might be pardoned, and your Majesty's clemency extended towards us. Albeit, divers of no small reputation in that realm were of opinion that the said fact merited neither to be solicited for nor yet pardoned." The persons wisely opposed to the restoration of the unprincipled assassins of Mary's Secretary were her true friends, as the result proved; but their names are not mentioned in this curious narrative of the secret proceedings of the outlaws—a narrative which casts the most important light on a period of her history which has been daringly interpolated with fiction by Buchanan and his copyists. Among other systematic falsehoods, it has been asserted that Mary was induced to accord her grace to those she pardoned while at Alloa by the personal influence of Bothwell. Archibald Douglas, one of the parties to whom her clemency was, most unhappily for herself and her husband, extended, certifies that it was in consequence of the intercession of her royal brother-in-law of France, through his ambassador, for he

[1] Darnley's signature was probably obtained when he was in a state of inebriety.

goes on to say, "The careful travail of the said De Mauvissière was so effectual, and your Majesty's mind so inclined to mercy, that within short space thereafter I was permitted to repair in Scotland to deal with the Earls Moray, Atholl, Bothwell, Argyll, and Secretary Lethington, in the name and behalf of the said Earl Morton, Lord Ruthven, Lindsay, and remaining *complesis*, that they might make offer in the names of the said Earl, &c., of any matter that might satisfy your Majesty's wrath, and procure your clemency to be extended in their favours. At my coming to them," to wit, the Earls of Moray, Atholl, and the other members of the Queen's Cabinet—with whom the reader may now plainly see, by this confession of their accomplice, Archibald Douglas, then acting as the agent of their banished confederate Morton, the conspiracy against the unfortunate Darnley originated—"after I had opened the effect of my message, they declared 'that the marriage between you and your husband had been the occasion already of great evil in that realm, and if your husband should be suffered to follow the appetite and mind of such as was about him, that kind of dealing might produce, with time, worse effects.' For helping of such inconvenience that might fall out by that kind of dealing, they," (Moray and the other four righteous plotters of evil with good intentions), "had thought it *convenient* to join themselves in band with some other noblemen resolved to obey your Majesty as their natural Sovereign, and have nothing to do with your husband's command whatsoever. If the said Earl would for himself enter into that bond and confederacy with them, they could be content to humbly request and travail with your Majesty for his pardon; but before they could any farther proceed, they desired to know the said Earl's mind therein. When I had answered, 'that he [Morton] nor his friends, at my departure, could know that any suchlike matter would be proposed, and therefore was not instructed what to answer therein,' they desired that I should return sufficiently instructed in this matter to Stirling before the baptism of your son, whom might God pre-

serve."[1] The traitors might have added, to serve as our puppet to colour the usurpation of his royal mother's regal authority—the real end of our patriotic association for ridding her realm of the inconvenient dealings of her consort, under pretext of loyalty to her. It was necessary, however, for the inciters of the plot to conceal the secret tendency of their machinations from their new ally, the blundering purblind Bothwell, who, unlike them, had no quarrel with Darnley, no deadly debt of vengeance to requite—for Darnley had never objected to his presence in the palaces or councils of the Queen. Him they allured to join the murderous league, and play the executive part, by the irresistible bribes of love and empire. If Bothwell could have resisted the temptations of his official colleagues as sturdily as he had done the oft-proffered gold of England, he might have had the honour of rescuing Mary Stuart from the iniquitous combination of which he was at once the tool and victim. As long as he remained faithful to his duty, she was safe, and her husband also, for it was in his power to have protected both, being at the head of the military force of the realm. It was, therefore, essential to the accomplishment of the designs of his confederates that Bothwell should be drawn into their coalition. Well did they know the nature of the man whom their friend Throckmorton, six years before, so well described as boastful, hazardous, and vain-glorious; nor had they forgotten his audacious project, in the spring of 1562, for surprising the Queen at Falkland, and carrying her off to the lone fortress of Dumbarton, with the assistance of her desperate lover, the Earl of Arran—a project which the disclosures of that unfortunate young nobleman had rendered abortive. The subsequent madness of Arran might naturally incline any reasonable woman to doubt his revelations on that subject; and Mary, though she had dealt rigorously with Bothwell in the first transports of her indignation, when believing him guilty of the presumptuous intention of abducting her, had not hesitated to recall and employ him in assisting to quell the rebellion excited by the Earl of Moray and his

[1] Harl. Lib., xxxvii. b. 9, f. 126.

faction, on her marriage with Darnley.[1] Her royal favour towards Bothwell, so far from diminishing after his union with Lady Jane Gordon, was more decidedly manifested on his becoming a married man—an evidence rather of propriety of feeling than the reverse. The loyal services he performed for her at the time she was in the hands of the assassins of David Riccio, and after her escape with her repentant husband from Holyrood, well merited the confidence and rewards both united in bestowing upon him. His power had turned the scale against the confederate Lords at that epoch, and so it might reasonably have been expected to do again, if they had not succeeded in beguiling him from his duty by the flattering promise of marrying him to the Queen as soon as he could bereave her of her husband, and rid himself of his wife. The turpitude of his embarking in so monstrous a scheme is really less remarkable than his folly in suffering himself, at the mature age of six-and-thirty, to be cajoled like an unreflecting schoolboy into the snares of designing villains, who were tempting him to assist in a crime for the purpose of making him responsible for the penalty. In like manner had Morton, Ruthven, George Douglas the Postulate, and the conspirators for the assassination of David Riccio and the deposition of their liege lady, drawn the unwary Darnley into their unhallowed confederacy scarcely nine months before, by promising to crown him King of Scotland, as the reward for his ungrateful treason to his wife and Sovereign. The same unscrupulous men were now, from their convenient lurking-place at Newcastle, where they had succeeded their friend Moray and his company, arranging their league with them for the destruction of their former confederate Darnley. The part of accredited agent between the outlaws in England and the fatally-trusted traitors in Mary's Cabinet, which in the preceding league, for the assassination of David Riccio and the deposition of the Queen, the Earl of Lennox had undertaken, was in this, for Darnley's murder, performed by his kinsman, Archibald Douglas, who, according to his subsequent recital of his

[1] See vol. iii., Queens of Scotland.

proceedings, "returned to Newcastle, and delivered the message with which he was charged by Moray and his fellow-conspirators, Argyll, Bothwell, Atholl, and Lethington, to Morton, in the presence of his friends and company, and they all condescended to the terms proposed, and entered into the band." [1]

Such, then, were the actual conspirators against the husband of their Sovereign; such the precise state of the plot at the time the royal pair were spending that miserable week together at Craigmillar Castle, of which a brief outline has already been given from the report of Du Croc to Archbishop Beton.[2] It is possible that Darnley either received a hint or felt a presentiment of his danger; for instead of remaining with the Queen till she was well enough to proceed to Holyrood, he departed on the 3d of December[3] in an abrupt and uncourteous manner to Stirling, where, instead of proceeding to his apartments in the Castle, he took up his abode in Willie Bell's lodgings in the High Street.[4] His deportment at this time is reported by Du Croc, in general but expressive terms, "to have been incurably bad."

The effect produced by Darnley's unkindness on the mind of his royal wife, whom he had left sick, sorrowful, and weary of life, in the hands of her physicians at Craigmillar, was marked with secret satisfaction by the two leading spirits of the conspiracy, her brother the Earl of Moray, and her secretary, Lethington. They, having more especial access to her in privacy, and being endowed with deeper powers of observation than their confederates, deemed the opportunity too favourable to be neglected for assailing her with strong temptation, under the flattering guise of sympathising concern for her distress, and friendly suggestions for relieving her from her injurious bondage to the most insensible and ungrateful of men. They proceeded with extreme caution, keeping the purpose of the murder care-

[1] Letter from Archibald Douglas to Queen Mary, written in 1583—Harl. Lib., Brit. Mus. Printed in Robertson's Appendix.
[2] Keith's Preface.
[3] Labanoff's Journal, vol. i., Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart.
[4] Anderson's Collections.

fully concealed from the Queen, and artfully probing the real nature of her feelings towards her husband, by mooting the question of a divorce as a matter of political necessity for the good of the realm. Previously, however, to opening so delicate a discussion with her Majesty, they, on Darnley's departure from Craigmillar Castle, considered it necessary to ascertain whether Huntley the Lord Chancellor—who had no quarrel with that unfortunate Prince—could be induced to enter into their confederacy. Archibald Douglas has mentioned the Earl of Argyll among the originators of the plot; but Argyll himself, who ought to know somewhat of the matter, solemnly declares "that it was first communicated to him at Craigmillar Castle by Moray and Lethington," whom he, in conjunction with Huntley, denounces "as the authors, inventors, devisers, counsellers, and causes of the said murder."[1] The following statement, which we give in their own words, makes the fact apparent:[2] "The said Earl of Moray and Lethington came in the chamber of us, the Earl of Argyll,

[1] Protestation of the Earls of Argyll and Huntley, in Anderson's Collections, and Goodall.

[2] Anderson's Collections, vol. iv. p. 188. Robertson ignores this important evidence against his hero, the righteous Earl of Moray, altogether, being too unfavourable to his determinate purpose of making the Queen guilty of her husband's death, to be noticed in any way. Laing, with greater courage, declares it to have been written by Leslie, bishop of Ross, and sent by Mary from Bolton to the two Earls for their signature; but even if this had been the case, it would not invalidate their attestation of the facts. It was not every nobleman of the sixteenth century, in Scotland, who was capable of so clerkly an act as to put a long deposition into an intelligible form. Sir Walter Scott gives a characteristic stroke, illustrative of the state of letters in Scotland in the beginning of that century, when he makes Darnley's great-grandfather, Archibald, Earl of Angus, exclaim—

"Thanks to St Bothan, son of mine,
Save Gawain, ne'er could pen a line."

So much for Laing's objection, if it be granted him, that Leslie, the historian of Scotland, acted as their scribe; but the style of the letter is very different from Leslie's florid, argumentative, and impassioned language. Let any one compare it with his "Defence of Mary Stuart's Honour," and then say whether there is the slightest similarity in point of authorship between that composition and the terse, business-like form in which these two great law-officers, the Lord Chancellor and Justice General of Scotland, have couched their deposition of the conversations which took place between Moray, Lethington, and them, and subsequently with the Queen, on the subject of the divorce. It bears the simple impress of truth in every word, and is far better authenticated as a document than anything that has been produced against Mary.

in the morning, we being in our bed, who, lamenting the banishment of the Earl of Morton, Lords Lindsay and Ruthven, with the rest of their faction, said, 'that the occasion of the murder of David, slain by them in presence of the Queen's Majesty, was to trouble and *impesche* [hinder] the Parliament, wherein the Earl of Moray and others should have been forfaulted and declared rebels; and seeing the same was chiefly for the welfare of the Earl of Moray, it should be esteemed ingratitude if he and his friends in reciprocal manner did not interpose all their puissance for relief of the said banished, wherefore they thought that we of our part should have been as desirous thereto as they were. And we agreeing to the same, to do all that was in us for their relief, provided the Queen's Majesty should not be offended thereat,' Lethington proposed and said, 'that the nearest and best way to obtain the said Earl of Morton's pardon was to promise to the Queen's Majesty to find a mean to make divorcement betwixt her Grace and the King her husband, who had offended her Highness so highly in many ways.' Whereunto we answering 'that we know not how that might be done,' Lethington said, the Earl of Moray being ever present, 'My Lord, care ye not thereof; we shall find the mean well enough to make her quit of him, so that you and my Lord of Huntley will only behold the matter, and not be offended thereat.' Then they sent to my Lord of Huntley, praying him to come to our chamber. This is as they dealt with us particularly," observes Argyll; "now let us show what followed after we were assembled."[1] Huntley then takes up the narrative, and proceeds with it, speaking as Argyll had done, in the plural number: "We, Earl of Huntley, being in the said chamber, the Earl of Moray and Lethington opened the matter likewise to us, in manner foresaid, promising, if we would consent to the same, that they should find means to restore us in our own lands and offices." Here it is necessary to explain, or rather to remind the reader, that a considerable share of these were bestowed on Moray and his creatures after the battle of Corrichie, and not yet

[1] Anderson's Collections, vol. iv. p. 188.

formally restored in Parliament, by reason of the illegal interruption and dismission of the last, convened by the Queen expressly for that purpose. Moray and Lethington, however, promised to stand good friends to him, and cause the Earl of Morton, Ruthven, and the rest of that company, to do the same in time coming, if he would co-operate in their present design. "Our answer was," he continues, "'that it should not stop by us that it came not to effect in all that might be profitable and honourable both for them and us, and especially where the pleasure, weal, and contentment of the Queen's Majesty consisted; and thereon we four—viz., the Earls of Huntley, Argyll, Moray, and Secretaire Lethington—past all to the Earl of Bothwell's chamber, to understand his advice on this thing proposed, wherein he gainsayed not more than we. So there, after we passed altogether toward the Queen's Grace, where Lethington, after he had remembered her Majesty of a great number of grievances and intolerable offences that the King,' as he said, 'ingrate of the honour received of her, had done to her Grace, and continuing every day from evil to worse,' proposed, 'that if it pleased her Majesty to pardon the Earl of Morton, Lords Ruthven, Lindsay, with their company, they should find the means, with the rest of the nobility, to make divorcement betwixt her Highness and the King her husband, which should not need her Grace to mell therewith, to the which it was necessary that her Majesty should take heed to make resolution as well for her own easement as that of her realm; for he troubled her Grace and us all, and, remaining with her Majesty, would not cease till he did her some other evil turn, when she might be impesched to put remedy thereto.' After this persuasion, and divers others, which the said Lethington used by these that every one of us showed particularly to her Majesty, to bring her to the said purpose, her Grace answered, 'that under two conditions she might understand the same,—the one, that the divorce were made lawfully; the other, that it were not prejudice to her son, otherways she would rather endure all torments, and abide the perils that might chance her in her lifetime.' The Earl of Both-

well answered, 'that he doubted not but the divorcement might be made without prejudice in anywise of my Lord Prince,' alleging 'the example of himself succeeding to his father's heritage without difficulty, albeit there was divorce between him and his mother.'"[1]

The facility with which divorces had been made within the last forty years, both in England and Scotland, was among the crying sins of the age; nor was there wanting a precedent even in Mary's own royal lineage of such doings. Witness the easy manner in which her grandmother, Margaret Tudor, was permitted to dissolve her nuptial plight to her second husband, the Earl of Angus, and contract wedlock more agreeable to her roving fancy, with the Lord of Methven—a precedent of which Queen Mary would, of course, be reminded by those who were tempting her to repudiate her husband; nor would she have forgotten it herself, if she had held the sacred obligations of marriage so lightly as to have given her offending lord a rival. But no. Deeply as he had aggrieved her, she could not brook the idea of an irrevocable separation; and when her Ministers went on to propose, "that after the divorce had been made he should reside by himself in one part of the country, and she in another, or he should leave the realm," she interposed with the suggestion, "peradventure he may change;" adding, "that it were better that she herself for a time passed into France, and abode there till he acknowledged himself." Lethington, who had seen her so frequently in the course of the last two months sighing for death, under sense of intolerable wrong, but understood not the long-enduring tenderness of woman's love, misconceived the reason of her demurs, and said, "Madam, fancy ye not we are here of the principal of your Grace's nobility and Council that shall find the mean that your Majesty shall be quit of him without prejudice of your son?—and albeit my Lord of Moray, here present, be little less scrupulous for a Protestant than your Grace is for a Papist, I am assured he will look through his fingers thereto, and behold our doings, and say nothing to the same,"—an engagement for his

[1] Anderson's Collections, part iv. p. 188.

quiescent consent to the violation of one of the primal laws of God which Moray heard in silence, neither resenting the sarcasm nor objecting to the principle; while Darnley's royal consort—she with whose weakness the subtle tempters had essayed to tamper in the cunningly-chosen moment when they saw her writhing under the conflicting agonies of a chafed spirit and a wounded heart—nobly and wisely answered, "I will that ye do nothing whereto any spot may be laid to my honour or conscience, and therefore, I pray you, rather let the matter be in the estate it is, abiding till God of his goodness put remedy thereto; that ye believing to do me service may possibly turn to my hurt and displeasure."[1] "Madam," rejoined the pertinacious Lethington, "let us guide the business among us, and your Grace shall see nothing but good, and approved by Parliament." This, as the Queen had positively rejected the divorce, was to try whether she would allow her husband to be proceeded against in a constitutional manner, by an impeachment to which he stood amenable for dismissing, by his own usurped authority, the Three Estates of Scotland in Parliament assembled while holding the Sovereign as a prisoner. What need had Mary, therefore, to involve herself in the trouble and guilt of a murderous plot against the life of a person who had thus committed himself? She had only to comply with her Ministers' request "to let them guide the matter for her," and leave him to be dealt with by her Parliament. But it was because she could not be induced to act against him in any way, and, according to the report of the Spanish ambassador, "negatived the conspiracy in every point,"[2] that the confederates were reduced to the necessity of falling back on their original plan of preventing the inconveniences that might ensue to them from his determined hostility, by taking him off—no new thing in Scotland—by an assassination. Before they left Craigmillar Castle a bond was drawn for the murder by Sir James Balfour, the notorious Parson of Fliske, evidently the self-same docu-

[1] Anderson's Collections.

[2] Cited in the notes of Dr Lingard's History of England, vol. vi., from "Memorias," p. 319.

ment to which Archibald Douglas alludes in his letter to the Queen. It stated "that it was thought expedient and most profitable for the common weal by the whole nobility, especially the Lords undersigned, that such a young fool and proud tyrant should not reign nor bear rule over them, and that for divers causes they had concluded that he should be taken off by one way or other; and they also agreed to defend and fortify whosoever should take the deed in hand to do it, for it should be every one's action, reckoned and holden as if done by themselves."[1] This bond, or at any rate a duplicate copy of it, was given to the Earl of Bothwell, with the sign-manuals of the principal conspirators. But as the Queen was neither art nor part in their design, there is no allusion to her, not even for the deceitful object of colouring their atrocious purpose with professions of loyalty to her and zeal for her service.

It must be clear to every one not wilfully obtuse to reason, that if the Queen could have been induced either to divorce and banish her husband from the realm, or to leave him to be dealt with by her peers in Parliament, there would have been no occasion for her Ministers to enter into a secret and illegal bond for his murder. Poor Mary was at this time harmlessly occupying her attention, and seeking to beguile her deep-seated melancholy, with maternal hopes and cares, and ambitious dreams of the future greatness of that beloved babe, whom she had predicted would be the first Prince who should unite the hostile realms of England, Scotland, and Ireland under his pacific sceptre. He had been brought from Stirling to meet her on her return from her progress through the Merse, and she was fondly superintending the arrangements for the approaching solemnity, when he was to make his first public appearance to his future subjects.

Among the inedited Treasury Accounts we find a warrant, subscribed by the royal mother, enjoining Sir Robert Richardson to deliver to her faithful servant, Bastian Paiges, "forty ells of taffety of the cord, to *be some prepara-*

[1] Confession of the Laird of Ormiston, in Arnott's Criminal Trials, Appendix, p. 386.

tifs for the baptism," dated at Craigmillar the 3d day of December 1566; Bastian's acknowledgment that he had received the said forty ells of taffety of the cord, of three different colours, bearing date the 6th.[1] These colours were red, blue, and green, the habits she had promised to present to the Earls of Moray, Argyll, and Bothwell, for their state dresses or liveries on that occasion.[2]

Craigmillar Castle, the scene where so many exciting incidents took place, is in the parish of Liberton, about two miles distant from Edinburgh, of which it commands a glorious prospect. It is seated on a lofty eminence below the Pentlands, and above the fair lake of Duddingstone. Craigmillar had been a favourite resort of Queen Mary in her happier days, and she had located a colony of her French domestics and artificers in the adjacent hamlet, which obtained, in consequence, the name of Little France —a name perhaps of her own bestowing. A venerable thorn in the romantic grounds that surround the picturesque ruins of Craigmillar claims the honour of having been planted by her own hand. The donjon, with its flanking towers, the desecrated chapel, the "banquet-hall deserted," and desolate sleeping-apartment which still bears her name, derive melancholy interest from their association with this painful period of Queen Mary's history, mute witnesses of her misery, and of the guilty machinations of the traitors who signed the death-doom of the luckless Darnley within those walls. It may appear strange, under all the circumstances, that his slaughter did not take place then and there; for the castellan, Sir Simon Preston, that false Provost of Edinburgh whose complicity in the confederacy for the murder of David Riccio, and the arrest of the Queen, Darnley had indignantly denounced, was the brother-in-law of his arch-enemy Lethington. But the secret under-plot for Mary's deposition, which was intended as the sequence of his murder, was not sufficiently advanced, nor could either be consummated without the personal assistance of the Earl of Morton, and the restoration of his

[1] Royal Records, General Register House, Edinburgh.
[2] State Paper MS., Drury to Cecil, inedited.

seventy-five companions in exile, whose lands and puissance remained, during their exile and forfaulture, in the hands of the Crown. Unless Moray and Lethington were supported by the return of their outlawed confederates, and the accession of so considerable an addition of physical power to their faction, as well as their votes in Parliament, Bothwell might have forestalled their game by turning round upon them and denouncing them as the murderers of Darnley, crushed them with his military force, and claimed the hand of the Queen, not as their gift, but as the reward of having avenged the death of her consort. Thus Darnley was permitted to depart unscathed from Craigmillar Castle; his hour was not yet come.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXVII.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary leaves Craigmillar Castle for Edinburgh—She completes her twenty-fourth year—Goes to Stirling with her babe—Her dejected spirits—Will not eat—Walks in Stirling park and town with Melville—Their conversation—Arrival of the English ambassade—Queen's state-reception of the Earl of Bedford—English commissioners for the baptism forbidden by their Sovereign to give Darnley the title of King—His irritation—Baptism of the Prince—Royal banquet—English commissioners take umbrage at a pageant—Queen pacifies the tumult—Display of fireworks—Queen creates her baby Duke of Rothesay, &c.—Progress of the two-fold conspiracy for Darnley's murder and her deposition—Mary's presents to the English ambassadors—Urged by them and her own Ministers to pardon Morton and the other outlaws—Her reluctant consent—Her illness and dejection—Temporary reconciliation with her husband—He owns his faults—Their want of money—They agree to have some of their plate coined—Queen's Act of Grace for Morton and seventy-six outlaws, published—Darnley leaves Stirling in anger—Queen Mary goes to Drummond Castle—Returns to Stirling to attend to ecclesiastical affairs—Restores the Consistorial Court—Visits Tullibardin—Returns to Stirling—Darnley falls ill of the small-pox at Glasgow—His illness mistaken for poison—Calumnies on Queen Mary—Darnley desires to have her physician—She sends him—Darnley's rash plots against Queen Elizabeth's government, and intrigues with the English Roman Catholics discovered—Queen Mary presides at the marriage of Mary Fleming and Lethington.

QUEEN MARY found herself sufficiently recovered to leave her retreat in the wood-embosomed towers of Craigmillar, for her palace of Holyrood, on the 7th of December 1566. It was the day on which her Consort entered his one-and-twentieth year. She completed her twenty-fourth on the morrow. The unkind perversity with which the misjudg-

ing Darnley had again withdrawn himself from her conjugal society, and his incurably bad deportment, rendered these anything but joyful anniversaries to either. If John Knox himself had been in Edinburgh at that time, laying down the law on royal manners, and thundering out anathemas from his pulpit in *auld St Geilis* on "fiddling and flinging," he could not have prescribed a more lugubrious commemoration for the birthdays of the fair Popish Queen and her Popish Consort. There were neither games, balls, banquets, nor masks, as on former occasions, for Mary took no pleasure now in anything but tears. Nor did change of scene produce change of cheer with her, when she left Edinburgh and proceeded to Stirling, taking her royal infant with her, to be in readiness for the baptism. "So many and great sighs as she would give," observes Sir James Melville,[1] "that it was pity to hear her, and overfew were careful to comfort her. Sometimes she would declare part of her griefs to me, which I essayed to put out of her mind by all possible persuasions, telling her 'how I believed that the greater multitude of friends she had acquired in England should have caused her to forget, in Scotland, the lesser number of enemies and unruly offenders, unworthy of her wrath; and that her excellent qualities, her temperance, clemency, and fortitude, should not suffer her mind to be oppressed with remembrance of that vile turn." To this soothing language Melville, being unfortunately entirely guided by Moray, added strong persuasions for her to forgive and recall Morton and the other banished traitors. Knowing her compassionate disposition, he represented to her the destitute condition to which the offenders were reduced, "not having," he said, "a hole to put their heads in, nor a penny to buy them a dinner; so that persons of her noble nature would think them almost punished enough. This communing," continues Melville, "began at the entry of her supper, in her ear, in French, when she was casting great sighs, and would not eat for no persuasion that my Lords of Moray and Mar could make her. The supper being ended, her Majesty took me by the hand,

[1] Memoirs of Sir James Melville—Bannatyne Club edition.

and past down through the park of Stirling, and came up through the town, ever reasoning with me upon those purposes; and albeit she took hardly with them [Morton and the other outlawed traitors] at the first, she began to alter her mind, and think meet that my Lord of Bedford should make suit for the rebels, they to be banished out of England and Scotland during her pleasure, and to be better unto them with time, according to their deportment. 'And, for her part, she intended to proceed with such a gracious government as might win the victory over herself and all her competitors and enemies in times coming,' as she had done at her first home-coming, which she could do as well as any prince or princess in Europe." [1]

Queen Mary's winter-evening stroll with Sir James Melville, down from the castled rock, through the royal park of Stirling, to the town and back, a round of about a mile and half, must have occurred before she had succeeded in inducing her wayward consort to leave his separate establishment in Willie Bell's lodgings and return to his apartments in the Castle; for she was, it appears, at that melancholy meal, of which neither Moray nor Mar could persuade her to taste, seated in companionless state at her regal board. Darnley was, therefore, absent. His conduct, so strangely opposed to the usages of royalty, and the idea of the comments his behaviour would excite among the distinguished foreigners who were coming to assist at the christening of her son, was of course most vexatious to her.

The journal subsequently fabricated for her defamation has the following entry: "Dec. 5. They [meaning the Queen and Bothwell] pass to Stirling, and take the King from his lodging in Willie Bell's house, and place him very obscurely in the castle." But Mary did not leave Edinburgh till the 10th. She generally rested either at Linlithgow or Mid Calder one night, and sometimes another at Callander House. She had the infant Prince with her, and was in very ill health herself, so that she could not travel fast at that season, and probably did not reach Stirling till the 12th, or the 11th at the earliest.

[1] Memoirs of Sir James Melville—Bannatyne Club edition.

Darnley's objection to reside in the castle was on account of his distrust of Moray's uncle, the Earl of Mar, the captain of that royal fortress, and his hatred of Lady Mar; but he was induced by the Queen to return, probably the day after her arrival.

Mary sent Sir James Melville, well accompanied, to meet and welcome the Earl of Bedford, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador extraordinary for the baptism of the Prince, in order to have the first speech of the Earl, to inform him rightly of her proceedings, and overthrow all the evil bruits invented by her enemies; "for," observes Melville emphatically, "as I have said before, it was a perverse time, and the more the number of her friends increased in England, the more practices her enemies made, and the manier lies they invented against her."[1] This is an important testimony, as all that Melville says in her favour is—first, because, being her particular confidant, always in her personal suite, and authorised by her to act the part of a faithful monitor in anything he considered amiss in her proceedings, he enjoyed a far better opportunity of knowing her real characteristics and conduct than any of her defamers; secondly, because he was in the interest of Moray, for whose rich and fat things he forsook Mary in her adversity, and lent the aid of his facile pen to gild the crimes of that false supplanter of his royal mistress, when she, in her desolate prison-house, despoiled of regal authority and wealth, had no power of rewarding him for the testimony he occasionally bears to her virtues, and the falsehood of her political libellers. Bedford affected so much regard for Mary that she believed he was one of the surest friends she had in England: a very fatal mistake; for not only had he been a confederate in David Riccio's murder, and for her deposition, but he continued leagued with both Moray in Scotland and Morton in England in their designs for her ruin, and was himself one of the most unscrupulous of her defamers. The evil reports of this unfortunate Princess, with which his letters teem, are undeserving of credit, being, for the most part, hearsay scandals, derived from nameless

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs, p. 170—Bannatyne edition.

and probably disreputable authorities; and due allowance must be made for the alarm naturally entertained by so enormous an engrosser of Church lands as the Earl of Bedford, lest a Roman Catholic sovereign should ever be permitted to succeed to the throne of England. If Mary had embraced the Reformed faith, her path would have been clear and triumphant in both realms.

Bedford was received very honourably by the gentlemen of Lothian, and was by them convoyed to the Duke of Châtelherault's house in the Kirk-of-Field,[1] where he was lodged during his sojourn in Edinburgh. He made his state entrance into Stirling on the 14th of December, with the other English gentlemen deputed by Queen Elizabeth on this mission—namely, Sir Christopher Hatton, her Vice-chamberlain and reigning favourite; George Carey, Lord Hunsdon's eldest son, cousin to Elizabeth; Mr Lyggon, the confidential friend of the Duke of Norfolk; a good number of the knights and gentlemen of Yorkshire, and almost all the captains of Berwick.[2] The ambassade, consisting of eighty persons, arrived at Stirling on the 14th of December. Queen Mary held a Court at Stirling Castle for their reception the same day, when Bedford presented to her, with all proper compliments, the splendid christening-gift Queen Elizabeth had sent for her godson, being a massive silver font, richly gilt, weighing 333 ounces, having cost the sum of £1043, 19s.[3] In allusion to the rapid growth and plumpness of the infant heir of Scotland, Bedford had been instructed to say pleasantly to the royal mother, on presenting the font, "that it was made as soon as the Queen his mistress heard of the Prince's birth, and was big enough for him then; but now he, being grown, is peradventure too big for it, it might be used for the next child, provided it be christened before it outgrew the font."[4]

He was also the bearer of a ring, of the value of a hundred marks, as a token from Queen Elizabeth to the

[1] Diurnal of Occurrents. [2] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[3] Stowe's Chronicle. Chambers's Life of James VI.
[4] Keith. Church and State in Scotland.

Countess of Argyll, whom she had appointed to act as her proxy at the baptism of the Prince, "as the time of year would not allow her," she said, "to send any of her own ladies,"—adding "that she had made choice of the Countess of Argyll, thinking it would be most agreeable to her good sister the Queen of Scots, having heard how dear she was to her."[1]

Nothing could be more deceptive than demonstrations of friendship on the part of Queen Elizabeth. She had never forgiven Mary's marriage with their mutual kinsman Darnley, whom she continued to call her subject. She refused to recognise his titular dignity as King of Scotland, and had forbidden the Earl of Bedford and his suite to treat him as such at the baptism of his own son,[2] though she had condescended to accept the office of godmother to the babe. Mary was placed in a most painful dilemma by this determination; for it was impossible to permit her husband to incur the risk of being exposed to a public insult, in the presence of the representatives of foreign princes and her own subjects, without resenting it, and she was in no position to embroil herself in hostilities with so powerful a neighbour as Elizabeth. Under these circumstances, it became a matter of expediency for Darnley to absent himself, both from the religious solemnity and the fêtes given in honour of the baptism.

The calumniators of Mary Stuart have not failed to torture this fact into a proof of her hatred to her unfortunate husband, and of her desire of degrading him in the eyes of the ambassadors and nobles assembled at Stirling. Buchanan even goes so far as to assert that Darnley had no dress fit to appear in, and that the Queen alleged the tardiness or neglect of his tailor as the cause of his absence[3]—a fiction not too absurd to impose on the warm hearts and credulous minds of the simple unreflecting classes to whom it was necessary to render her odious, in order to deprive her of their

[1] Chambers's Life of James VI. Diurnal of Occurrents—Keith.
[2] Camden's Annals of Queen Elizabeth.
[3] Detection of the Doings of Mary Queen of Scots, by George Buchanan.

support. A contemporary historian,[1] well informed on the subject, in his able reply to Buchanan's libel on his royal mistress, observes, "that although her perfidious brother, the base-born Moray, and his confederates, did their utmost to alienate her from her husband by repeating all his follies and exaggerating all his trespasses, and though in truth the Lord Darnley's deportment was vexatious enough to her—such, indeed, as would not have been borne by any other than a Queen, wise, modest, and discreet as she was—she endured patiently, but with a breaking heart, all his misconduct,—never leaving him, though he often deserted her. But even at those times when he abandoned her society, and withdrew himself to a distance, she diminished not in the slightest degree the grandeur of his first appointments, but continued to supply him with all things pertaining to his position. I say this," continues our authority, "because her calumniators have dared, in opposition to the truth, to pretend 'that the Queen kept the Lord Darnley destitute of the means of supporting his rank—that she robbed him of his rights, and left him in meaner equipage than any private person's husband in Scotland.' But there are five hundred gentlemen who can convict them of their falsehoods, and make them confess that the Lord Darnley was never so ill accompanied but his retinue was equal to that of a great prince; nor was he ever denied his share in the state attendance of the Queen, who, out of regard to her duty, always treated him with far greater respect than was paid him by those who have complained of the small account in which he was held by her. And what, I pray you, was the cause that this poor young Prince could not show himself at the baptism of the Prince his son, but the traitorous machinations of Moray and his confederates? who, in their persevering malice, had so well practised with the English that the Earl of Bedford, sent by the Queen of England to the baptism of the Prince of Scotland, enjoined those of his suite, 'under pain of royal indignation, in case the Lord Darnley should appear on that

[1] Belforest, author of "Innocens de la Royne d'Escosses"—Jebb.

occasion, not to make him any reverence, nor to show him more respect in any way than to the simplest gentleman present;' and therefore, to avoid entering into a quarrel with the English, who were thus resolved to brave him in his own house, and in despite to him to pay greater honours to others in his presence, in a place where the precedency was due to him, he voluntarily kept out of sight, and was not, as her pedant libeller affirms, driven away by his wife."[1] Darnley himself had received, more than two months before the arrival of the ambassade, intimation of the personal affront that was preparing for him by the royal godmother-elect of the Prince his son. "He is assured," wrote Du Croc to the Queen-mother of France, October 17th, "that they who are to come for the Queen of England to the said baptism will make no account of him, and he fears he shall receive an humiliation."[2] The only blame that can attach to Mary in this affair, was her want of foresight in requesting Elizabeth to act as sponsor to the Prince, without first obtaining her recognition of Darnley's regal title. But as it was a fixed principle with Elizabeth never to allow subject of hers to accept a title from another Sovereign, and she had peculiar reasons for showing her ill-will to Darnley, she would not make any exception in his favour. Darnley behaved with his usual want of judgment; for, instead of concealing his annoyance, and uniting with Mary to frame some plausible excuse for not appearing, he betrayed the greatest irritation, entered into an open quarrel with her to whom the cause of displeasure was no less mortifying than to himself, threatened to leave her, and was only prevented by the prudence of Du Croc from a public exposure of his ungovernable violence of temper. "The very day of the baptism," observes that statesman, "he sent three several times, desiring me either to come to see him, or to appoint him an hour that he might come to me in my lodging, so I found myself obliged to signify to him that, 'seeing he was in no good correspondence with the Queen, I had it in charge from the Most Christian King my master to hold no conference with him;' and I

[1] Belforest. [2] Labanoff's Lettres de Marie Stuart, vol. i. p. 378.

caused to tell him likewise, 'that as it would not be very proper for him to come to my apartments, because there was such a crowd of company there, so he ought to be aware that there were two passages to it, and if he should enter by the one, I should feel constrained to go out at the other.'"[1] The conduct that had provoked so stern a rebuff from one who had hitherto been unwearied in his soothing and friendly offices, must have been outrageous, and was probably the result of inebriety. "His bad deportment," continues Du Croc, "is incurable; nor can there be any good expected from him for several reasons."[2] Mary, still weak from her late illness, was suffering severely at this agitating period from the effects of a personal accident which had befallen her on her journey from Edinburgh to Stirling, but bore up with uncomplaining patience under all her trials, and charmed every one with her courtesy and winning grace.[3]

At four o'clock, the hour appointed for the baptism, Tuesday, December 17th, the Prince was borne from his chamber to the Chapel-Royal by the French ambassador, who represented Mary's royal brother-in-law, Charles IX. of France, as one godfather; M. Du Croc acted as the proxy of the other—namely, the Duke of Savoy, whose ambassador, Moretta, had not yet arrived. The Countess of Argyll represented the Queen of England as godmother. The Earl of Atholl, nearest kinsman to the father of the princely babe, walked next the French ambassador in the procession, bearing the tall christening-taper of virgin wax. The salt was carried by the Earl of Eglinton, the *cude* (chrisom) by the Lord Sempill, the bason and laver by the Bishop of Ross. A double line of nobles, each bearing a lighted *pricat* (taper) of wax, extending from the Prince's chamber, conveyed him to the door of the Chapel-Royal. There he was received by the Archbishop of St Andrews in full pontificalibus, with staff, mitre and cross, the Bishops of Dunkeld and Dunblane, and the other ecclesiastical assistants at this ceremonial, which was performed according to

[1] Du Croc to Archbishop Beton, December 23, 1566—Keith's Preface.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

the ritual of the Church of Rome.[1] The office of the saliva was, however, omitted by the express desire of the Queen, conveyed in terms neither refined nor complimentary to the ministers and customs of her Church, for she said, "no priest shall spit in my child's mouth."[2]

The royal infant was baptised by immersion in the silver font presented by the Queen of England. His fair aunt of Argyll had subsequently to perform a public penance for having assisted, as the proxy of that nursing-mother of the Reformation, at this pompous Popish christening. The Prince received the names of Charles James and James Charles, which were thrice repeated by the heralds, with flourish of trumpets within the chapel, and at the chapel door, to the people assembled without, together with rehearsal of his titles.[3] The whole ceremony concluded at five o'clock with singing and playing on organs, and the babe was borne back to his chamber with great triumph by the noble assistants in procession.[4]

The christening ended, Queen Mary invited her distinguished guests to accompany her to the great hall of Parliament, then rich with Gothic sculpture and the portraitures of Scottish monarchs, and hung with costly tapestry, and there supper was served. Her Majesty sat at mid board, with the French ambassador at her right hand, the English on her left; and M. Du Croc, representing for that day the Duke of Savoy, sat at the board end. The Earl of Huntley served the Queen as carver, the Earl of Moray as cupbearer, and the Earl of Bothwell as sewer.[5] "The heralds, macers, trumpeters, preceded three of the Masters of the Household, Finlater, Francisco Busso, and Gilbert Balfour, who walked abreast, bringing up the meat. Then came George Lord Seton singly, followed by the Earl of Argyll,

[1] Diurnal of Occurrents. [2] Doron Basilicon, by James VI. [3] Keith.

[4] Buchanan pretends that the Earl of Bothwell had the whole ordering and guiding of the christening committed to him; but this assertion is manifestly contradicted by the fact that he was one of the only three Scotch nobles who refused to gratify the Queen by assisting at these Popish rites. "At this time," says the Diurnal of Occurrents, "my Lords Huntley, Moray, Bothwell, nor the English ambassador, came not within the said chapel, because it was done against the points of their religion."—

[5] Ibid.

each bearing a fair white wand; the other lords and gentlemen followed, with fair white torches to light the hall." The first course went off peacefully and well, though the French nobles, and the Queen's French servants, expressed some jealousy among themselves that she paid the greatest attention to her English guests—yet not enough, it seemed, to satisfy the latter. The second course, in which were all the subtleties and sweet dishes, a dainty show, was brought into the hall, at once, gaily set out in goodly order on a moving stage placed on wheels, which Sir James Melville styles "a trim engine," attended by a band of musicians, clothed like maidens, playing on divers instruments, and singing to the music, preceded by a party of drolls, grotesquely dressed to represent satyrs with long tails, carrying whips in their hands, and running before the meal to clear a passage for the ambulatory stage through the crowded hall up to the Queen's table; which done, they performed all sorts of characteristic antics to amuse the company. This device was planned and arranged by Bastian, Mary's French Master of the Revels, who doubtless expected to be greatly applauded for his pleasant conceits; but unfortunately it happened that the satyrs exceeded their instructions, for, not contented with running round the hall, "they put their hands behind them and began to wag their tails in such sort that the English guests, ready then as now to give and take offence, supposed it had been done in derision of them;" "daftly apprehending," observes Melville, slyly,[1] "that which they should not have seemed to understand; for Master Hatton, Master Lyggon, and the most part of the gentlemen, desired to sup before the Queen's great banquet, that they might see the better the whole order and ceremonies of the triumph: but so soon as they saw the satyrs wagging their tails, or *rumples*, they all sat down upon the bare floor behind the back of the board, that they should not see themselves scorned, as they thought. Master Hatton said unto me, 'that gif it were not in the Queen's hall and presence, he should put a dagger into the heart of that French knave

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

Bastian, whom he alleged 'did it for despite that the Queen made more of them than of the Frenchmen.' I excused the matter the best I might; but the rumour was so great behind the Queen's back, where her Majesty sat and my Lord Bedford, that they heard, and turned about their faces to wit what the matter meant. I showed them how that it was for the 'satyrs': the Queen and my Lord Bedford had baith enough to do to get them satisfied. It fell out unhappily at such a time, and the English gentlemen committed a great error to seem to understand it as done against them." [1]

And here it is necessary to explain that Bastian was suspected by the testy Southron guests, at the royal christening-banquet in Stirling Castle, of having dressed and instructed those who enacted the character of satyrs to give an unpolite illustration of the taunting epithet, "the lang-tailed English," which in the days of the first Edward had been addressed, among other defiances, to her besiegers by that sharp-witted Scottish heroine, the black-haired Agnes, Countess of March, during her valiant defence of Dunbar Castle; a salutation more keenly resented than the arrows she aimed among their ranks from the loop-holes of her well-defended towers, or even the pots of boiling pitch which she instructed her maidens to pour on their heads when they attempted to scale her walls. The expression passed into a verbal weapon of offence against "the old enemy," and, notwithstanding the changes of costume which the lapse of more than two centuries had produced, was unforgotten. The choler of Master Hatton, a newly-raised person, puffed up into self-importance by his enamoured Sovereign's favour, was, however, more likely to have been excited by some personal neglect or fancied slight on the part of the Scottish Queen, than by the suspected allusion of her jesters and buffoons to an ancient historical gibe against his nation. But from whatever source the offence conceived by Hatton in the festive hall of Stirling originated, it is certain that, with the base malice of a parvenu, he took a deadly vengeance on poor Mary, when a desolate and oppressed captive in Fotheringay Castle.

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

Among the poor and destitute who sat in the entry of Stirling Castle to receive the alms of their ever compassionate Queen, on the day of the baptism of her son, was a poor man having a young child on his knee, whose head was so large it could scarcely be supported by the feeble disproportioned frame of the unfortunate little creature—a decided case of water on the brain, but which so affected the superstitious feelings of a gentleman who beheld it, that he could not restrain his tears for fear of the evil he judged it to portend.[1] Curious trait of the ignorance and excitable temper of the times!

Mary was munificent in her presents to the principal members of the English ambassade, giving with royal spirit, for the honour of Scotland, to the full value of the costly font that had been sent by their Sovereign. To the Earl of Bedford she presented a chain worth two thousand crowns, which he mentions, in his letter to Cecil, with great complacency, "as a very proper chain, set with pearls and some diamonds." George Carey, the kinsman of Elizabeth, received a chain of pearls, and a ring with a fair diamond. Hatton she honoured with a rich chain, with her own portrait; and to Mr Lyggon, and five other gentlemen, she gave gold chains.[2] The French ambassador, who had brought her no present, got nothing but her thanks.[3]

The Earl of Bedford, on the part of his Sovereign, renewed the demand he had made at Fontainebleau, on the death of Mary's first consort, Francis II., for the ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh. Mary, in return, pressed on his attention the unwelcome question of her recognition as the heiress-presumptive of the English throne. She gave him, however, good words, and promised to send an especial envoy to discuss both matters.

"Two days after the baptism," according to the quaint record of a contemporary diary,[4] "the Queen's Majesty made a banquet, in very delicate fashion, at even. There was *masry* [masking] and playing in all sorts before supper." Then a grand display of fireworks brightened the Links of

[1] Calderwood.
[2] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[3] Keith.
[4] Diary of Occurrents.

Forth, a fort having been erected on the green beside the churchyard, "from which was shot artillery fire-balls, fire-spears, and other things," continues our authority, "pleasant for the sight of man." Mary, it seems, disdained not to take a personal share in the delight of her subjects at this attractive, and, in Scotland, novel exhibition, introduced by herself from France; for she left her royal banquet betimes, and, attended by her noble guests and jewelled dames, walked abroad among her humble lieges assembled in the park, a pleased spectatress of their pleasure and surprise. "When all was over she returned to the Castle, and there made James Prince of Scotland, Duke of Rothesay, Earl of Carrick and Cunningham, and Baron of Renfrew, after which she bestowed the honour of knighthood on several gentlemen, and the evening closed with music and dancing."[1] The prettiest sight in that gay week of regal pomp and pageantry must have been the ceremonial of the graceful royal mother belting her baby boy—who completed his sixth month on that important day—an Earl, assisting to invest him with his ducal mantle and coronet, placing the golden ring on his tiny finger, touching his heels with the spurs, then fondly clasping his dimpled upraised hands between her own; while his lady-mistress made him kneel on the maternal lap to perform in silent show his homage, and bend his little head in unconscious assent to the oath of allegiance that was read or pronounced for him—that oath which cruel traitors were so soon to compel the helpless innocent to break.

The testimony of Du Croc, that Darnley confined himself to his apartments in the Castle during the baptismal fêtes, refutes the vulgar tradition that, to show his displeasure to the Queen, he outraged public opinion, and disgraced himself by spending his time in inebriety in the tavern in St Mary's Wynd. If we may credit the assertion of a contemporary historian,[2] the project of destroying that unfortunate Prince, by means of gunpowder, originated with the Earl of Moray, who had, he says, prepared everything for the execution of his cruel design during the "fire shows" at Stir-

[1] Diary of Occurrents. [2] Adam Blackwood.

ling; but his uncle the Earl of Mar, the captain of the Castle, being in the secret, frustrated it by preventing the destined victim from going out to see the pageants, which, boy-like, he was bent on doing. It is certain that, in the midst of the national rejoicings that occupied the attention of the Queen at the christening festival of her boy, the operations of the conspirators were silently progressing towards the accomplishment of their dark purpose. The arrival of their agent, Archibald Douglas, in Stirling, from his guilty mission to the Earl of Morton and the seventy-six other Scotch outlaws lying at Newcastle, gave a lively impetus to their proceedings. He was the bearer of the full assent of that company to the murderous band against the husband of their Sovereign. "With this deliberation," writes Archibald Douglas to Queen Mary, "I returned to Stirling, where, at the request of the Most Christian King and the Queen's Majesty of England, by their ambassadors present, your Majesty's gracious pardon was granted to them all."[1] What can be said in excuse for Robertson's want of candour, when, with such a document as Archibald Douglas's letter in his possession, he has positively affirmed "that Mary, who had hitherto remained inexorable to every entreaty on their behalf, granted the pardon of Morton and his companions at last to the solicitations of Bothwell"? Monsieur Mignet follows on the same tack, ignoring Queen Elizabeth's testimony, who says, in plain words, "The Earl of Morton had refuge in our realm, when we might have delivered him to death, as his father also and uncle had before, with no small favour at our father's hands; and he himself was restored for gratifying us, upon instance made by our order, at the Earl of Bedford's being with the Queen."[2] Bedford also, after he had succeeded in wringing that fatal concession from the reluctant Mary, writes thus to Cecil on the subject: "The Earl of Morton having now obtained his *dress* [redress of his alleged grievance of outlawry], doth think himself much beholden

[1] Robertson's Appendix.
[2] Letters from Queen Elizabeth to Throckmorton, July 27, 1567—Printed in Keith, 428.

unto you for your favour and good-will therein. There were some that sought to *let* [hinder] the same all they could, but his friends stuck so to it in his behalf as prevailed therein, in the which the Earl of Bothwell, like a very friend, joined with my Lord of Moray—so did Atholl and others."[1] Bothwell did but join with Moray and Morton's other friends, his new political allies, in petitioning Mary to grant their oft-rejected suit in behalf of the outlawed traitors. When the realities of the case are calmly considered, it will be perceived that she had no other alternative than to stifle her fears of encountering her husband's anger, and to concede the point with the best grace she might; it being impossible for her, as the Sovereign of Scotland, to resist so strange a combination of powers and persons as those by whom the requisition was made. She succumbed in evil hour, and consented to accord a general amnesty to the assassins, excepting only three persons—George Douglas, who had stabbed Riccio over her shoulder; Andrew Kerr of Fawdonside, who presented a cocked pistol to her body; and Patrick Bellenden, who aimed his rapier at her bosom. Moray triumphantly carried Bedford and his company with him to St Andrews, there to arrange with his confederates in Fifeshire the sequence of this successful move, in which Cecil had been an unseen assistant. The party at St Andrews was too select for Bothwell to obtain an invitation. From St Andrews Bedford proceeded to Hallyards in Fife, to visit and confer with his friend Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange. It is necessary, in order to unveil the nature of their connection, to quote a passage from a letter written by Bedford to Queen Elizabeth in the preceding summer, proving that this much-eulogised champion was the mercenary spy and secret-service-man of England: "It may please your Majesty to have consideration of the Laird of Grange, who, now since both Mr Randolph and Mr Killigrew are gone thence, is both best able and most willing to supply the lack that their absence shall cause; for, otherwise, the intelligences thence will be very hardly and very chargeably come by, and without him not so many, nor so

[1] Bedford to Cecil, Jan. 9, 1566-7—State Paper Office MS., inedited.

often, as is meet to be understood for your Majesty's service."[1] In his next letter[2] Bedford begs her Majesty to send a token to this useful auxiliary in Mary's court; but Grange becomes subsequently a very importunate beggar on his own account, showing thereby that sordid avarice, not zeal for the true Evangile, so often pleaded in excuse of treason, was the exciting cause of his devotion to the English Queen. Verily she gave him his reward, but not till he had performed his full share of the base work required from the instruments employed in the defamation and ruin of their hapless Sovereign. Instead, however, of following the English ambassador to the secret conferences at St Andrews and Hallyards with Moray and Kirkaldy, the purport of which the events of the next seven weeks rendered suspicious, it is necessary to return to the personal history of Mary Stuart.

The bustle and excitement of the festive week was over in Stirling; the proud wish of the royal mother had been gratified; her boy had been presented at the baptismal font by the representatives of the Sovereigns of England, France, and Savoy, and the religious ceremony had been publicly solemnised according to the rites of her own Church. Crosier, mitre, rochette, and cope had been ostentatiously paraded on that occasion; tapers had blazed, and choral anthems had been sung, without let or hindrance either from the nobles or their followers. The people had appeared well pleased with the show, and would probably have tolerated the presence not only of the Nuncio, but the Pope himself, rather than have been disappointed of witnessing the royal fêtes and pageantry that followed. Mary was at that time the idol of her subjects, to whom the fears of losing her, during her late dangerous illness, had shown her value; while her popular and generous demeanour, when she came among them again in her beauty and regal splendour on this interesting occasion, with the blooming heir she had given to Scotland in her arms, endeared her more than ever to their hearts. To them the

[1] Bedford to Cecil, July 17, 1566—State Paper Office MS., inedited.
[2] Ibid., August 3.

absence of her English husband was matter of indifference—his arrogance had disgusted them, and he was but regarded as the thorn that rudely fretted the tender bosom of their royal rose. Mary had exerted herself successfully to please every one at the baptismal fêtes, forgetful of her personal sufferings; but Du Croc, in his confidential letter to her faithful servant Beton, observes, with sympathetic concern, in allusion to the precarious state of her health—"I am of opinion that she will give us some trouble yet; I cannot be brought to think otherwise, so long as she continues so pensive and melancholy. She sent for me yesterday, when I found her laid on her bed, and weeping sore. She complained of a grievous pain in her side, and, from a surcharge of evils, it chanced that the day her Majesty set out from Edinburgh to this place she hurt one of her breasts on the horse, which she told me is now swelled. I am much grieved at the many troubles and vexations she meets with."

Deeply as her husband's conduct had wounded her, Mary knew that their interests were inseparable, and instead of reciprocating his sullen and resentful manner, she reasoned with him so successfully as to convince him of his folly. He acknowledged his fault with tears, and "promised, for the time to come, to live as a good husband ought with a good and faithful wife, and never again to listen to those who had given him evil counsel."[1] Conjugal confidence being thus restored, she consulted with him on the subject of their pecuniary ways and means—the sum voted by the Convention of Peers for the expenses of the baptism having proved insufficient to defray the cost. Her French dower had been anticipated, and there were immediate and pressing calls for money. In this emergency they agreed that the best way of providing for their privy-purse expenses would be to send such portions of the royal plate as might best be spared to the mint. Among the articles selected were some pieces that had been generally devoted to Darnley's use, but which he voluntarily resigned for this purpose.[2] This simple fact Buchanan has

[1] Innocens de Marie Stuart, printed in 1572. [2] Ibid.

distorted into the absurd tale that the Queen, out of malice and hatred to her husband, deprived him of his silver dinner-service, and doomed him and his friends to eat off pewter.[1] The temporary reconciliation between the royal pair, during which this sensible plan for supplying their pecuniary wants was arranged, must have been effected on the 23d of December, after the departure of the Count de Brienne and his suite, by whom Du Croc had despatched his letter mentioning Darnley's bad deportment and Mary's illness and depression of spirits. Their amity only lasted till the morrow, on which day the Act of Grace which had been extorted from the reluctant Queen for Morton and his unprincipled associates was published; and Darnley, unable to control his feelings on the subject, left Stirling in a transport of indignation, without taking leave of her.[2] The effect of his angry and abrupt departure on Mary, at so unseasonable a time, in her deplorable state of health and spirits, may be surmised; the particulars of her joyless Christmas festival are unrecorded. Either, however, for change of air and scene, or in fulfilment of a previous engagement, she honoured Lord Drummond with a visit at Drummond Castle in Perthshire, with her Court. She returned to Stirling on the 28th of December, having to receive a deputation from the General Assembly of the Congregation relating to the provision for the ministers, which she settled on a more liberal scale, and returned gracious answers to all their demands.[3] She availed herself at the same time of the opportunity of doing what she could for the ecclesiastics of her own Church, and suffered herself to be persuaded by the wily Archbishop of St Andrews to restore the old Consistorial Court, under his jurisdiction. In these difficult and delicate affairs she was occupied till the 30th of December, when she proceeded to Tullibardine to visit her Chamberlain, and returned again to Stirling on the 1st of January to meet the Earl of Bedford, previously to his departure for England.[4] Meantime her unlucky consort, who had left Stirling in a very con-

[1] Detection of the Doings of Mary Queen of Scots, by George Buchanan. [2] Knox. Chalmers. Tytler.
[3] Keith. Chalmers. Knox. [4] Chalmers.

siderable state of excitement on the Christmas eve, immediately on his arrival at Glasgow, where the small-pox was beginning to spread, took the infection. The premonitory symptoms of that malady, little understood in those days, alarmed his father and every one about him; and as he had been attacked with sickness on his journey, they declared he had gotten poison, in which opinion John Abernethy, an eminent physician, coincided;[1] for to that cause, or to magic, not only the sudden deaths, but the mysterious illnesses of princes, were invariably attributed in those dark ages of ignorance and crime. The nostrums administered to royal patients, under such erroneous notions, must not unfrequently have produced untimely death, of which no one but the physician was guilty.

Notwithstanding, however, the blunders of the sapient Dr Abernethy in prescribing, and of course inflicting antidotes for poison, in the early stages of the small-pox, youth, and the natural strength of a constitution which had struggled through measles and several other severe illnesses since his arrival in Scotland, enabled Darnley to overcome both disease and doctor, and the irruption came out at the usual time.[2] His face and body were covered with livid pustules, being that malignant character of small-pox vulgarly called "the purples." Buchanan pretends that these pustules were the effect of poison administered to Darnley by the Queen before he left Stirling, and dwells with all the declamatory verbosity of falsehood on this cruel calumny, affirming also that the Queen refused to permit her physician to go to him, when he humbly sent to crave that favour.[3] Mark how one brief sentence from the official report addressed to the English Secretary of State by the Earl of Bedford, a witness anything but friendly to Mary Stuart, confutes both slanders: "The King is now at Glasgow

[1] Buchanan.

[2] "The occurrents are, the Lord Darnley lieth sick at Glasgow of the small-pox."—Sir William Drury to Sir William Cecil, January 23, 1566-7. Birrel's Diary and Diary of Occurrents both state that Darnley was lying at Glasgow sick of the small-pox. Birrel adds, "though some suspected he had gotten poison."

[3] "Detection of the doings of Marie Stuart, Queen of Scotland," by George Buchanan. Also his "History of Scotland."

with his father, and there lyeth full of the small *pockes*, to whom the Queen hath sent her *phisicion*."[1] The despatch of which this forms a portion was written for the information of his own government by Bedford, long before the above slanders were invented by Buchanan; it still remains in MS. among the voluminous masses of the Scotch Correspondence in the State Paper Office. The slanders were printed and published, with other calumnies on the unfortunate Scottish Queen, by Buchanan, in his malignant libel, the "Detection," in Latin, French, Scotch, and English, and widely circulated; the Scotch translation, printed in 1572, being dedicated to Queen Elizabeth.[2]

Bedford wrote his important letter from Berwick on the 9th of January, having previously, as he states to Cecil, returned to Stirling after his visits in Fife, to hold a final conference with Queen Mary. He arrived at Stirling on

[1] The Earl of Bedford to Sir William Cecil, Jan. 9, 1566-7, from Berwick—State Paper Office MS., Scotch Correspondence.

[2] Anderson's Collections, vol. i. p. 1. Buchanan's libel on his royal mistress was published at Rochelle, under the title "Histoire Tragique de la Royne d'Escosse," translated into French by M. Camuz, a Huguenot author, together with translations of Buchanan's versions of the Silver Casket Letters, and the confessions of some of the persons executed for Darnley's murder. It is to the edition of this work, printed at Middlebourg in the year 1578, in French, under the *imposing* title of "Memoires de l'Estat de la France sous Charles IX.," that Monsieur Mignet refers constantly as his great authority for Mary's alleged guilt. Strange that our accomplished contemporary, accustomed as he is to the language of documents and official state papers, could be guilty of the fallacy of quoting exploded political libels in a French dress, prepared for that purpose by a traitor, who sold his pen to the successful conspirators against his royal mistress! The fact that Buchanan condescended thus to employ his talents is fully certified in a paper put forth by Cecil's authority, for the purpose, not of exposing the baseness of the author, but of accrediting his book, by stating "that the said Mr George Buchanan was one privy to the proceedings of the Lords of the King's Secret Council, and that the book was written by him not of himself, nor in his own name, but according to the instructions given to him by common conference of the Lords of the Privy Council of Scotland, by him only for his learning penned, but by them the matter ministered, and allowed and exhibited by them as matter that they have offered, and do continue in offering, to stand and justify before our sovereign lady, or her commissioners in that behalf appointed;" adding the well-known fact, "that when they were here for that purpose, the author of the said book was one among them."—Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 263.

the 1st of that month, and remained till the 5th, between which days Darnley, having become aware of the real nature of his malady by the appearance of the pustules on the fifth day of his sickness, sent to inform the Queen of it, and, so far from suspecting her of cherishing evil designs against his life, far less of having proceeded to the guilty lengths of administering poison to him before he left Stirling, gave a practical demonstration of his confidence in her integrity and kindness, by requesting her to send her own physician to his aid.[1] He had evidently had enough of Dr Abernethy and the Glasgow practitioners, whose blundering conclusions in regard to the cause of his illness must have put his life in great jeopardy. That Mary complied with his request, and had sent her physician to him before the 5th of January, we have Bedford's testimony in his own handwriting. Why should Buchanan's suborners have employed their literary organ to declare she did not? The answer is obvious—Because it was a fact proving her wifely sense of duty, her humanity, and her desire of preserving his life. And more, far more than this, a fact affording the strongest argument of her innocence of the crime of consenting to his murder; for, if she had desired his death, she had clearly an opportunity of procuring it by sure and silent means. Few persons in those days recovered from the small-pox. She had but to make that observation, with significant look and tone: or, if plainer speech were required, to add, that it would not be for the good of Scotland if he came forth again to work more mischief. No lack would she have found of instruments to understand her meaning, had she spoken thus, or even been suspected of desiring her husband's death; for, as her illustrious contemporary Shakespeare, who understood so well the temper of the times he lived in, has observed—

> "It is the curse of kings to be attended
> By slaves, that take their humours for a warrant
> To break into the bloody house of life;

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[1] State Paper MS., Scotch Correspondence.

And on the winking of authority
To understand a law, to know the meaning
Of dangerous majesty, when perchance it frowns
More upon humour than advised respect."

But Mary Stuart was of a different spirit from the monarchs of the sixteenth century; and so far from availing herself of the facility for crime which her position might readily have commanded, she showed at all times a tenderness for human life that well beseemed a female ruler. She had with one stroke of her pen cancelled the deep debt of vengeance which the unprovoked treason of Morton and his numerous accomplices in guilt had incurred;—men who had successfully laboured to rend asunder the sacred ties of wedded love, and taught her husband his first lessons of treachery and cruelty—men who, holding the high office of legislators, had broken the laws it was their duty to uphold — corrupted her magistrates, and persuaded her burghers to unite with them in their invasion of her palace, and the privacy of her quiet chamber — shed blood in her presence, and imperilled her life—insulted and imprisoned her, and then, in the very spirit of cowardly aggressors, circulated, both in England and her own realm, base aspersions on her honour as a woman, by way of justifying their crimes against her as a sovereign.[1] Was it probable, then, that she who had pardoned criminals like these, would have proved inexorable to their victim, and he the husband of her choice, her nearest kinsman, and the father of her child? What is there that woman will not forgive to the man she loves? But Mary's accusers assert that she had ceased to love Darnley, and that he had become the object of her bitterest hatred. Why, then, did she refuse to be separated from him by the facile divorce system of that polygamous century? If nothing but his death would serve, why not have left him to the justice of her offended laws? Or if she preferred involving herself in the horror and suspicion of a private murder, why not have had it quietly performed by one of her medical staff during his dangerous illness? Full well did Darnley know,

[1] Narrative of the slaughter of David Riccio by Morton and Ruthven.

how incapable she was of harming him, when, by requesting her to send her physician to his succour, he put his life into her hands. And this physician, M. Lusgerie, having been with her when she had the small-pox, and witnessed the skilful manner in which she had been treated in that malady by Pirnel, the physician of her royal father-in-law, Henry II. of France, and being also in possession of the prescriptions[1] used so successfully in her case, was, as far as human means can be considered, the instrument of his recovery, by counteracting the dangerous mistakes of those who had well-nigh brought him to the grave. Let it be remembered, too, that Mary was herself in very ill health, accompanied with morbid depression of spirits, when the requisition was made for her to spare the experienced and probably beloved physician, who had attended her from childhood, and that, with generous disregard to her own personal comfort and convenience, she dispensed with his services, and sent him without delay to the relief of her offending but suffering husband. No wonder Buchanan, who was employed to write her down, laboured to deprive her of the credit of so amiable an instance of self-sacrifice—a trait perfectly incompatible with the inhuman conduct he imputes to her. The Earl of Bedford's testimony on this subject is of the utmost weight; for not only was he at Stirling at the time, but, in consequence of his secret understanding with Moray, Lethington, and several of her Cabinet Council, behind the scenes. Queen Elizabeth subsequently asserted that she instructed the Earl of Bedford to endeavour to mediate a reconciliation between Mary and her husband. She even taunted Mary, when a captive in an English prison, and compelled to bear her insults, with ingratitude for these amiable offices on her part: there is not, however, the slightest evidence of the kind in her instructions to Bedford; and if we may suppose that they were given verbally, coupled with her commands to withhold from the Lord Darnley the outward marks of reverence due to royalty, in what manner did she suppose

[1] See Queen Mary's letter to Queen Elizabeth on the subject of the small-pox, in the preceding volume.

that proud and passionate Prince would have taken the best advice in the world prefaced with insult? The angry effervescence of Darnley's temper, though vented on his wife, was excited by the mortifying necessity of absenting himself from the royal solemnity of his infant's christening and the succeeding fêtes, to avoid the indignities with which Bedford and his suite were prepared to treat him; and he was driven to utter desperation when, in consequence of their urgency, Mary was induced, in opposition to his will —and in that instance it may surely be added, his better judgment—to pardon and restore his former guilty associates, Morton and the other outlawed assassins of Riccio, who were banded with the traitors in her Cabinet for his murder at that very time. Bedford, in his letter to Cecil, mentions "that the agreement between the Queen and her husband was nothing amended," but makes no allusion to any efforts made by him to compose their differences. The facts indicate that he acted anything but the blessed part of a peacemaker between the royal pair.

The irrefragable proofs that are preserved of Bedford's foreknowledge of the conspiracy for the murder of Riccio and the deposition of Queen Mary, afford presumptions, at the least, that he was not in ignorance of the league into which the same men had entered for the destruction of their previous dupe, but now declared enemy, Darnley, and the consummation of their dark purposes against their hapless Sovereign, whose party in England had waxed so strong as to render her an object of increased jealousy to Elizabeth. Darnley, too, had been occupying his plotting brain in wild projects for disturbing the government of his powerful kinswoman, having engaged himself in a perilous correspondence with some of his old acquaintances of his own religion, for getting possession of Scarborough Castle and the fortifications of Scilly.[1] These follies being divulged just at this momentous crisis, by William Rogers, one of the treacherous English adventurers whom he had received and employed, could scarcely fail of producing a most inimical

[1] Deposition of William Rogers, January 16, 1566-7—State Paper MS., inedited.

influence on his fate. William Rogers, on being questioned "how the Lord Darnley, calling himself the Scottish King, came by the plan of the platform of Scilly," stated "that the elder Standen, Master of the Horse to the said King, told him, 'that one Martin Dale, holding some office under Sir William Godolphin, the governor of Scilly, brought or sent the plan of the platform to Lord Darnley, who took an accompt of the ordnance in the isle,' observing 'that it would serve for a castle of his father's in Scotland.'" Rogers had forgotten the name of the castle, but Lennox was not possessed of any fortress of national importance worthy of receiving the visionary acquisitions of his son. Rogers also deponed "that there was a certain gentleman in the west country, naming himself sometimes Moon, and sometimes Clayton, who repaireth often to the Lord Darnley, from divers gentlemen in the west, whose agent, Moon, *alias* Clayton, was in Scotland no later than two days before he left. Standen," he added, "had said that Lord Darnley did intend, in case any mutiny or insurrection arose in England, or her Majesty Queen Elizabeth chanced to die without issue, to surprise or take the Castle of Scarborough, which would stand him in good stead, the more so as he hoped to have many friends in those parts, naming none of them, however, but Sir Richard Cholmley." Rogers declared also "that he had heard Francis Cholmley, Sir Richard's son, say 'that he could pleasure the Scottish King much in the delivery of Scarborough Castle, of which he had the keeping under his father;' and, by his private talk, Francis Cholmley seemed to profess a great deal of favour and affection to the said Lord Darnley."[1] The Cholmleys being then, as now, one of the most ancient and powerfully-connected families in Yorkshire, and adherents to the ancient faith, the devotion of the head of the house and his heir to a Roman Catholic Prince occupying Darnley's position in the royal succession, and the husband of the Queen of Scots, was rather an alarming revelation, combined with the information of Darnley's intrigues

[1] Deposition of William Rogers, January 16, 1566-7. State Paper MS., inedited.

and secret correspondence with the gentlemen in the west of England. Among other matters calculated to annoy Queen Elizabeth, it was discovered from the disclosures of Rogers that "Darnley and Mary received letters very often from the captive Countess of Lennox, through an ancient gentlewoman who had access to that lady, and delivered her letters to a person of the name of Mompesson, by whom they were conveyed to Flanders, and from thence transmitted to Scotland." Nor was this all, for at the same time were forwarded letters of a treasonable character from Lady Lennox's cousin and fellow-prisoner in the Tower of London, Arthur Pole, who as the male representative of George Duke of Clarence, his grandfather, pretended to claim a better title to the crown of England than the descendants of Henry VII. and Elizabeth of York,—the legitimacy of Edward IV.'s marriage with Elizabeth Woodville having been impugned—"but voluntarily offered to surrender, and make over whatever right and title he had either to the crown or succession of England, to the King and Queen of Scots, declaring his intention, as soon as he could get out of prison, of coming to them."[1] The clue to these dangerous correspondences and intrigues of Darnley had evidently been obtained by Bedford during his visit to Scotland. The examination of William Rogers, at which the above disclosures were made, took place, January 16. Twenty-five days later, Darnley ceased to exist.

Before, however, entering into the details of the mysterious tragedy by which the wild projects and mischievous intrigues of that restless Prince were brought to a sudden close, it will be necessary to return to Mary Stuart and her Court at Stirling. An event of no less interest to her and her royal household than the nuptials of her enamoured Secretary of State, the Lord of Lethington, to her beautiful Maid of Honour, Mary Fleming, the friend and companion of her childhood, was solemnised in the Castle on the 6th of January.[2] Mary Fleming was the third of the four attendant Maries who had entered into the holy pale of wedlock. Mary Livingstone, married before the Queen, was now

[1] Deposition of Wm. Rogers—State Paper MS. [2] Anderson's Col.

the mother of a fair son, who was brought up in the royal nursery as the companion and playmate of the Prince.[1] The light-minded Mary Beton had consoled herself for Randolph's expulsion from the Court of Scotland by marrying Alexander Ogilvie of Boyne.[2] She still held a post among the ladies of Queen Mary's bedchamber, being that Lady Boyne from whom Sir James Melville received the news of the birth of the infant heir of Scotland, and the order of their royal mistress to start for England with the letters announcing it to Queen Elizabeth. Mary Seton was the only one of the four Maries who persisted in celibacy; she remained immovably attached to the service of her royal mistress, through good report and evil report, as faithfully in a prison as in a palace. Mary Livingstone and her husband, John Sempill, were among those who gave bright examples of their courageous fidelity to their hapless Sovereign in her reverse of fortune. It is pleasant to be able to mention them among the bright exceptions to the ingratitude and treachery of the generation of vipers who basked in the sunshine of Mary Stuart's prosperity, and, not contented with forsaking her in adversity, turned upon her with reptile stings, and envenomed every wound envy and malice could inflict.

The wretched state of the Queen's health and spirits, together with the news of her husband's dangerous illness, prevented her from honouring the nuptials of Mary Fleming and Lethington with the like festivities she had provided for those of Mary Livingstone with John Sempill, or the yet more splendid entertainments she had united with Darnley in giving at the marriage of the Earl of Bothwell with her noble kinswoman, Lady Jane Gordon. But the bridal of Mary Fleming and the Lord of Lethington, though celebrated on the festival of Twelfth Day, or the Feast of Kings, produced no such hilarity in the royal halls of Stirling as had filled old Holyrood with glee two short years before, when the smiling Sovereign arrayed her beauteous namesake in her own regal robes, to enable her to support the dignity of Queen of the Bean, and almost bewitched Ran-

[1] Family Papers of the House of Sempill. [2] Maitland Miscellany.

dolph from his diplomatic craft by leading off the dance with him. Neither Mary Stuart nor Mary Fleming were ever to see such jocund days again. The dark purpose that occupied the attention of Mary Fleming's astute bridegroom, even during their honeymoon, could scarcely have failed to shed mysterious and portentous gloom over that usually happy season of wedded love; while the consequences of his successful crime led to a tragic and untimely fate for him, involving her and the offspring of their marriage in want and misery.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary sends a kind message and friendly letters to Darnley—Their reconciliation alarming to the conspirators—Reports spread of Darnley and his father plotting against Queen Mary.—Aggravating representations of tale-bearers—Queen Mary leaves Stirling for Edinburgh—Takes the Prince her son with her—Agitating rumours in Edinburgh—Queen traces them to Walcar and Hiegate—Examines and confronts them—Detects their discrepancies—Communicates her opinion to Archbishop Beton—Her pathetic allusion to her husband's misconduct—Proceedings of the conspirators against Darnley—Morton, Bothwell, Lethington, and Archibald Douglas, meet at Whittinghame to discuss his murder—Her Ministers require Queen Mary to sign an order for Darnley's arrest—She refuses—Darnley's verses—His penitence and desire to see her—She promises to come to him—Her journey delayed by bad weather—Disputes among her Italian servants—Chicanery of Joseph Riccio—He accuses Joseph Lutini of carrying off the Queen's bracelets—She makes Lethington write to Drury to send Lutini back to her—Her disdain of falsehood and fraud.

QUEEN MARY had sent a kind message to her husband by her physician, promising to come and see him herself as soon as the weather would allow her to travel so far.[1] It must be remembered that she was herself in very ill health; the cold was unusually severe, and the roads nearly impassable at that season. These circumstances, and the necessity of bestowing her undivided attention on public business connected with church affairs, the General Assembly being then sitting, combined to delay her journey; but she received due information of her husband's progress from her

[1] Lingard's History of England, vol. vi. p. 138.

physician, and, even according to Buchanan's statement, "she wrote many very friendly letters to him during his illness."[1] A virtual reconciliation had, therefore, taken place between the royal pair; they were on terms of amicable correspondence once more, and a reasonable prospect might be entertained of a most affectionate reunion when they met. Such prospect suited neither the selfish policy of Moray nor the audacious designs of Bothwell. As for Lethington, he being the object of Darnley's undisguised hostility, and having the fate of David Riccio before his eyes, the laws of self-preservation impelled him rather to destroy than be destroyed.

Reports of a nature calculated both to alarm and irritate the Queen began to be circulated. While she was at Stirling, she was assured by Moray and his colleagues that her husband and his father were assembling a force at Glasgow for the purpose of dethroning and imprisoning her for life,[2] and crowning the infant Prince, in order to govern the realm in his name. On the other hand, Darnley was told, for the purpose of goading him to some rash enterprise, that it was the Queen's intention to arrest and imprison him. Some bitter words appear to have escaped him, which were of course repeated, with the wonted exaggerations of tale-bearers, to the Queen. The persons from whom the reports emanated were Hiegate, the town-clerk of Glasgow,[3] and another Glasgow man of the name of Walcar, both servants of Archbishop Beton, Mary's representative at the Court of France. She summoned an especial Privy Council at Stirling Castle on the 10th of January, to take this agitating business into consideration. As the members of her Cabinet were leagued for the destruction of the unfortunate Darnley, and determined to make a last effort to induce her to consent to his death, everything was done to excite her

[1] History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 318.

[2] Letter of Queen Mary to Archbishop Beton—Labanoff, vol. i. p. 398. Blackwood's History of Queen Mary.

[3] Hiegate was indeed a notorious busy-body and falsifier. He had been brought before the Privy Council two years before, on the complaint of one of the bailies of Glasgow, for speaking slanderous words of him.—Chalmers, from Privy Council Register, Dec. 13, 1564.

apprehensions that her boy would be torn from her, and set up by his father as a rival Sovereign. Not considering herself and the infant Prince safe at Stirling, she departed with him precipitately for Edinburgh on the 13th of January, slept one night at Callander, and arrived at Holyrood Abbey on the 14th.[1] She found the same reports prevalent in her metropolis that had disquieted her at Stirling.

Moray strenuously advised his royal sister to frustrate the treasonable designs of her ungrateful husband and his confederates, by hastening to Glasgow at the head of a strong force, and taking the whole party by surprise before they could be aware of her intentions.[2] She had, however, the good sense to perceive that all these painful statements rested on hearsay; and she spent several days in entering into a personal investigation, sent for Walcar and Hiegate, and after questioning them separately, she caused them to be confronted in the presence of the Lords of her Council, and by collating and noting the discrepancies and palpable falsehoods in their depositions and those of the other witnesses who came to testify against her husband, satisfied herself that there was no reliance to be placed on their evidence.[3] Happy would it have been for Mary Stuart if the malignant charges subsequently brought against herself had been tried by the like test.

She ascertained that neither Lennox nor her husband was in a position to disturb her government, yet her equanimity was ruffled by the repetition or invention of many offensive observations reported to have been made of her by both. Wounds scarcely healed, having been rudely touched in the course of this investigation, bled anew, and the vexation of a sorely wearied, but surely not vindictive spirit, is perceptible in her communication of the 20th of January to her ambassador at the Court of France, Archbishop Beton. The whole of that letter relates to matters of an annoying nature, for she commences with a complaint that the command of the Scotch Archer-Guard, which per courtesy,

[1] Chalmers. [2] Adam Blackwood.
[3] Queen Mary's Letter to Archbishop Beton—Labanoff, Keith.

and almost of right, pertained to the heir of the Scottish crown, had been, she understood, promised, if not given, to the son of the Duke of Savoy; and she desires Beton to enter a protest in her name against any other appointment than her son, and promises, "if it be given to him, she will appoint such a nobleman for his deputy as shall be agreeable to the King of France.[1]" That there should have been need of such remonstrance was, of course, displeasing to Mary, both as the Sovereign of Scotland and the sister-in-law of the King of France, for the non-appointment of her son to the above honorary post was a marked affront to her. When any one sits down to write or dictate a letter which begins with a complaint, the same tone is sure to pervade the context; and Mary, after detailing the mischief-making reports circulated by Walcar, and traced to Hiegate, expresses her surprise that such malign inventions should have proceeded from persons in the service of the Archbishop, whom she had always found so faithful and affectionate to her, and doubts not he will be very highly offended with them, such matters tending to her inquietation and disadvantage, and troubling the tranquillity of the realm, which her study is to maintain, and retain in such integrity as may be. "And for the King our husband," she mournfully but proudly adds, "God knows always our part towards him, and his behaviour and thankfulness to us is likewise well known to God and the world. Always we perceive him occupied and busy enough to have inquisition of our doings, which, God willing, shall aye be such as none shall have occasion to be offended with them, or to report of us any ways but honourably, howsoever he, his father, and their *fautors*, speak, which we know want no good-will to make us have ado, if their power were equivalent to their minds: but God moderates their forces well enough, and takes the means of execution from them; for as we believe, they shall find none, or very few, approvers of their counsels or devices imagined to our displeasure."[2]

Let any one compare this genuine outpouring of Mary

[1] Queen Mary's Letter to Archbishop Beton—Labanoff, Keith. [2] Ibid.

Stuart's feelings, when her temper had been ruffled by the aggravating reports of tale-bearers, with the letters pretended to have been written by her within the week to Bothwell, and the difference will be at once perceived between reality and fiction,—the sentiments and language of a royal lady and the blundering attempts of a coarse-minded man—ignorant of the delicate mechanism of the heart of woman, its reserves and pride—to write in the character of a Queen. The author of the love-letters to Bothwell, like the unskilful poisoner, who frustrates his own malignant aim by pouring an ounce of arsenic into the destined victim's cup, instead of limiting himself to the minute portion of the deadly drug that could be swallowed and retained to work a fatal purpose, has, by his broad exaggerations, overshot his mark, and rendered his falsehood apparent. These surreptitious documents have indeed been quoted, in the absence of genuine evidence, to criminate Mary Stuart, and it was for that purpose they were written; but assuredly not by her.

By cross-questioning Walcar and other circulators of the rumours which had disquieted her, Mary had satisfied herself that they were unfounded, and that neither Darnley nor his father had a party sufficiently strong to disturb her government. The annoying report that she intended to imprison her husband she also traced to Hiegate, who had mentioned it to the Laird of Minto, by whom it was carried to Lennox, and by him communicated to poor Darnley, then on a sick-bed. That such a communication should have elicited a burst of angry invectives against Mary and her Council from a youth of his irascible temperament was to be expected: the object of the incendiaries by whom this artful system of false witness was devised was so far successful that feelings of mutual anger and distrust were renewed between the young royal pair. A keen sense of injury and some resentment is perceptible in Mary's allusions to the observations she had been told her husband and his father had made on her, but neither malice nor vindictive dispositions are betrayed. She writes with queenly dig-

nity, conscious of the superiority of her position, conscious of her own integrity, and appeals to that all-seeing Witness, whose eye had been on all her ways, to judge between her and her adversaries; yet, sensitive, as woman should be, to the opinion of the world, she declares "that by God's grace her doings shall be such as none shall be offended at them, nor able to report of her otherwise than honourably."[1] How Robertson and Mignet can fancy they detect foul purposes of murder in sentiments like these, it is impossible to imagine.

Archbishop Beton failed not to dismiss both Walcar and Hiegate from his service, in consequence of the Queen's indignant complaints of the falsehoods they had been circulating.[2] Before, however, her communication on that subject reached him, he wrote to her from Paris, telling her "that he had been especially requested by the Spanish ambassador to warn her to take care of herself, and that it was whispered in other quarters some plot was in agitation to surprise her; that the Spanish ambassador refused to enter into particulars, but had urged him 'to lose no time in hastening to her, and warning her of her danger.'" Beton unfortunately contented himself with writing, and his letter arrived too late to be of use, in consequence of his delaying it till he had obtained an audience of the Queen-mother of France, and inquired whether she could throw any light on the mysterious hints of the Spanish ambassador, or had heard any reports to his Sovereign's disadvantage. "On the contrary," replied Catharine, "the Count de Brienne, and La Forest, the ambassador at the Court of England, have reported Queen Mary's affairs to be in a prosperous state." She commended Mary much for pardoning Morton and his companions, and observed "that now she thought her royal daughter-in-law had nothing to fear, unless it were from the variance between her and her consort, which she hoped God might appease, with the rest of her traverses and cumbers; for it would be a great mean to compass more easily all her designs and enterprises, and especially it would

[1] Labanoff, vol. i. [2] Ibid.

induce Lady Lennox, whom she knew to be well favoured by a great part of the English nobility, to concur with her"[1]—in regard, of course, to the accomplishment of Mary's eager desire of obtaining her recognition as the successor to the English crown. The suggestion of Catharine de Medicis, as to the political expediency of a reconciliation between Mary and Darnley, referred to the reports she had just heard from Count de Brienne and his suite touching the bad terms on which the royal pair were, at the time when the ambassadors for the baptism of the infant Prince left Stirling, and for several months before, commencing, as we have shown, at Haddington, in March 1566, in consequence of the Queen's pardoning and restoring the Earl of Moray to her confidence, and increasing with every token of his all-powerful influence over her mind. Beton concludes his letter to his royal mistress with this emphatic warning: "Finally, I would beseech your Majesty, right humbly, to cause the captains of your Guard to be diligent in their office; for, notwithstanding that I have no particular occasion whereon I desire it, yet can I not be out of fear till I hear of your news."

The revelations of two of the confederates for Darnley's murder, the Earl of Morton and Archibald Douglas, prove that they and their accomplices were quietly arranging their plans for the perpetration of that mysterious crime in the sequestered shades of Whittinghame,[2] at the very time the Queen's mind was agitated by bewildering rumours of plots that had no existence—reports artfully devised for the purpose of diverting attention from their own designs, and preparing the public mind to ascribe the murder of Darnley to the vengeance of his royal wife.

On the 10th of January, Morton wrote to his friend Sir William Cecil to thank him "for all the favour and commodity he had shown him during his abode in England," and acknowledging his obligations to him "for having

[1] Keith's Preface.

[2] Morton's Confession — Bannatyne's Memorials. Archibald Douglas's Letter to Queen Mary.

employed the Earl of Bedford to obtain his pardon and recall."[1] Morton probably met Bedford and his retinue either at Berwick or Morpeth, on their return from their mission to the Scottish court. According to the slow rate of travelling at that season of the year in Scotland, through roads almost impassable with mire, or blocked with snow, he could scarcely reach his destination, Whittinghame Castle, in Haddingtonshire at the foot of the Lammermuir Hills, before the 14th of January, the same day the Queen with her Court and Council arrived in Edinburgh. The communication between Whittinghame and Edinburgh was easy, and might be accomplished in the course of a few hours, while the situation of that solitary fortress, embosomed in deep woods, rendered it a suitable trysting-place for the acting committee of the conspirators for the murder of the unfortunate Darnley. These were Lethington, Bothwell, Archibald Douglas, brother to Sir William Douglas, the Castellan of Whittinghame, and Morton, the real proprietor of the castle and domain, which, with the manor, the patronage of the church, and its appurtenances, had been granted to him by his too munificent Sovereign, Queen Mary, in the year 1564.[2] How he requited her for that benefit, the part he took in the conspiracy against her, and the murder of her Secretary, have shown. Light indeed were his motives for Riccio's slaughter, in comparison with those which prompted his co-operation in the murderous plot against his cousin Darnley, the formidable claimant of the Angus inheritance. Warned, however, by the inconveniences that had resulted to him from his public appearance as the leader of the former enterprise, he kept himself, like the cautious Moray, adroitly in the shade, leaving Bothwell, who was "both blind and mad with wickedness," to occupy the foreground, and incur the responsibility of the crime. Although Morton, even before he was suffered by his old confederates, Moray and Lethington, to set foot again in Scotland, had signified his assent to the

[1] State Paper Office MS.

[2] Topograph. Dict. Scot., vol. i.

bond against Darnley,[1] he affected, in his prevaricating confession[2] to the worthy Presbyterian ministers who attended him on the morning when long-slumbering justice inflicted the penalty of his crime, to have heard of the bloody purpose for the first time from the lips of Bothwell. "First after my returning out of England," he says, "where I was banished for Davie's slaughter, I came out of Wedderburn to Whittinghame, where the Earl of Bothwell and I met together, and in the yard of Whittinghame, after long communing, the Earl of Bothwell proposed to me the purpose of the King's murder, requiring what would be my part thereinto, seeing it was the Queen's mind the King should be ta'en away, as he said 'she blamed the King more of Davie's slaughter than me.'"[3]

It is to be observed that Morton, in his confession, as it is called, ignored all the conspirators but Bothwell and Archibald Douglas, whom he pretended "was not in his, but Bothwell's service." His object appears to have been to discredit Bothwell's exoneration of the Queen, and denunciation of the actual murderers of Darnley—a legally attested copy of Bothwell's declaration to that effect, signed by the Protestant Bishop of Sconen, and several other unimpeachable witnesses, and sealed with the King of Denmark's seal, having been produced at Morton's trial, and received by his judges and jurors among other evidences of his guilt.[4] Carrying hypocrisy, therefore, to the awful confines of eternity, and knowing by experience that the best way of deceiving the people was by persuading the ministers of his non-complicity in the crime of which he had come forward as the public avenger, he says,[5] "My answer to the Earl of Bothwell at that time was, 'that I would not in any ways meddle in that matter, whereof as yet I am not rid, being discharged to come nearer the Court than seven miles, and therefore I cannot enter myself in such a new trouble again.' After this answer, Mr Archibald Douglas entered into conference with me, persuading me to agree to the

[1] Letter of Archibald Douglas to Queen Mary—Robertson's Appendix.
[2] See Bannatyne's Memorials, 317-318. [3] Ibid.
[4] Forster to Walsingham, June 4, 1581—State Paper Office MS.
[5] Bannatyne's Memorials.

Earl of Bothwell. Last of all, the Earl of Bothwell, yet being in Whittinghame, earnestly proposed the matter to me again, persuading me thereto 'because it was the Queen's mind, and she would have it done.' Unto this my answer was, I 'desired the Earl Bothwell to bring the Queen's handwrite to me of that matter for a warrant, and then I should give him an answer, otherwise I would not meddle therewith;' the which warrant he never reported unto me," —could not report, not being able to produce any written proofs of Mary's disloyalty to her husband; yet it must be obvious that had she been on the terms of guilty correspondence with Bothwell which the conspirators assert, he would have been in no lack of evidence that she desired her husband's death. Archibald Douglas, no less anxious to conceal his share in Darnley's murder from the Queen than Morton was to hide his from the people he had governed, writes: "Immediately after, the Earl of Morton repaired into Scotland to Whittinghame, where the Earl of Bothwell and Secretary Lethington came to him. What speech passed there, as God shall be my judge, I knew nothing at the time; but at their departure I was requested by the said Earl of Morton 'to accompany the Earl of Bothwell and Secretary to Edinburgh, and to return with such answer as they should obtain of your Majesty,' which, being given to me by the same persons, as God shall be my judge, was no other than these words, 'Show to the Earl of Morton that the Queen will hear no speech of that matter appointed unto him.'[1] When I craved that the answer might be made more sensible, Secretary Lethington said 'that the Earl would sufficiently understand it,' albeit few or none at that time understood what passed between them."

These conferences for Darnley's murder were held, according to local tradition, beneath the sombre canopy of the gigantic yew which still overshadows a circular space on the green terrace near the ruins of the old castle of Whittinghame—meet trysting-place for such a conclave as the precious quartette who assembled to discuss the arrangements

[1] Robertson's Appendix, No. xlvii., vol. ii. p. 424.

for their guilty project within that funereal council-chamber of crime. The tradition, though romantic, is in accordance with the usages of the period, when, to elude the vigilance of spies and eavesdroppers, who were occasionally lurking perdu behind the tapestry or carved panels of baronial mansions, matters of perilous import were frequently arranged in the open air; and Morton himself declares he conversed with Bothwell on this subject in the garden, or, as he terms it, "the yard at Whittinghame." They were there secure from prying eye, or listening ear; but what a startling page might have been unfolded if the birds of the air, sole witnesses of the scene, had been able to describe the demeanour and report the words of these allies in wickedness, who were as false to each other as they were to their Queen, their country, and their God. They were men past the period of life when youthful sensibility, as in the case of their excitable victim Darnley, produces remorse for sin, and a fearful drawing back from incurring a further amount of guilt. They had arrived at that frightful stage of wickedness when the Holy Spirit ceases to strive with the powers of evil in the human heart, and conscience becomes obtuse. Persons they were strangely differing from each other in their characteristics. The curious original portrait of Morton, at Dalmahoy House, shows he was a Judas in complexion as well as character. He wears the Geneva hat, with high sloping crown and narrow brims, resembling a reversed pan or jar; but it neither conceals the villanous contour of his retreating forehead, nor the sinister glance of the small grey eyes peering from under his red shaggy brows. The very twist of his crooked nose is expressive of craft and cruelty; the long upper lip, hollow mouth, and flat square chin, are muffled in a bush of red mustache and beard; but the general outline is most repulsive, and bespeaks the hypocrite, the sensualist, the assassin, and the miser,—and all these he was. His talents were, however, such as enabled him to make men of greater abilities his tools and stepping-stones to the seat of empire. Yet we are told "that Archibald Douglas had the whole ruling and guiding of him." That priest-bred manager of plots must

have been a more able person than his patron, for not only did he escape the penalty of the crime, but succeeded in persuading Queen Elizabeth to sign the death-warrant of the royal widow of his victim, Mary Stuart. According to Morton's account, he took a leading part in the conference in the garden at Whittinghame. There too was the courtly bridegroom, Lethington, with his wit, subtlety, and elegance, masking the cold, world-hardened heart, which neither gratitude to his generous forgiving Sovereign could touch, nor the endearments of his newly-wedded wife charm from staining his honeymoon with murder. Lastly, the profligate, vain-glorious Bothwell, forgetful how much he had suffered for his first presumptuous plot for winning his beauteous Sovereign as Sabine brides were won by Roman bachelors, and ready to risk a scaffold and barter his soul for the chance of accomplishing his frantic dreams of love and empire. Bothwell was the only person of the four in ignorance of the deeper plot, to which the murder of Darnley, and the transfer of the royal widow for a few brief days to him, was the necessary introduction. But, "blind as well as mad with wickedness," the blundering Border chief rushed eagerly into the snares of subtler villains than himself, and combated with blockish stupidity the feigned reluctance and affected scruples of Morton, whose object was to draw the Queen herself into the plot against her husband's life, or to stimulate Bothwell to produce something in her handwriting that might serve as evidence of her favour to himself. A sonnet or letter, with a single term of endearment unbeseeming from a royal matron to a married man, would have been sufficient; and had Bothwell been recipient of such token of her favour to himself, he would not have scrupled to bring it forward. But the conferences at Whittinghame for Darnley's murder, after being prolonged from day to day, were finally broken off, according to Morton's own showing, in consequence of Bothwell's failing to give tangible proof of the Queen's assent to it.[1] This is corroborated by Archibald Douglas's declaration, "that Lethington had directed him to tell Mor-

[1] Morton's Confession, in Bannatyne's Memorials.

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ton 'that she would hear no speech of it'"[1]—would not allow it to be mentioned to her. Morton on this left Whittinghame, and proceeded to St Andrews to visit his nephew, the Earl of Angus. "A little before the murder," says he, "Mr Archibald Douglas came to me there, both with write and credit of the Earl of Bothwell, showing me that the purpose concerning the King's murder was to be done, and near a point, and to require my concurrence and assistance thereto. My answer to him was, 'I would give no answer to that purpose, seeing I had not gotten the Queen's warrant in write, which was promised unto me;' and therefore, seeing the Earl of Bothwell never reported any warrant of the Queen, I never meddled farther in it." In plain English, he left the executive part of the business to his understrapper Archibald Douglas. On being subsequently asked by the ministers "if he did not counsel him to the contrary?" he coölly answered, "I counselled him not to the contrary." No; though a word in disapprobation or remonstrance from his lips might have averted the tragic fate of his princely cousin. His pitiful excuse for concealing the atrocious purpose of the conspirators has actually been quoted as an evidence of Queen Mary's guilt, as if the assertion of a wretch, capable of the conduct he has described, ought to be received as proof of anything but his own villany, and the insatiable malice with which he persisted to the last hour of his existence in his calumnies on his unfortunate Sovereign. His words are, "To whom should I have revealed it? To the Queen? She was the doer thereof.[2] I was minded, indeed, to reveal it to the King, but that I durst not for fear of my life; for I knew him to be sic a bairn that there was nothing told him but he would reveal it to her again. I foreknew, indeed, and concealed it, because I durst not reveal it to any creature for my life." The cowardly sophistry of his defence need scarcely be exposed. If he had said, "I durst not reveal it to the King because he hated me—would not permit me to enter his presence—and had forbidden the Queen to

[1] Archibald Douglas's Letter to Queen Mary.
[2] Bannatyne's Memorials.

pardon and reverse my forfeitures, much less to reinstate me in my office of Lord Chancellor," it would have betrayed the motive that animated him to be art and part to this murder.

But why did he not warn his kinsman, the Earl of Lennox, the husband of his kind cousin, Margaret Douglas, of the conspiracy against the life of their son? They had not quarrelled with him, though Darnley had. He could have had no fear of Lennox betraying his friendly counsel to the Queen, for she would not suffer him to enter her presence. He was cognisant of the cruel purpose for the assassination of his uncle's grandson several weeks before it was perpetrated; what prevented him from naming it to his friend Moray, to Ruthven, Lindsay, or any other of the seventy-six honourable men newly pardoned for their confederacy with him in the murder of David Riccio? No doubt he did, and often, but not for the prevention of the crime, seeing they were all parties to it; for the accredited conductor of the conspiracy, Archibald Douglas, explains that, even before Morton and his companions left Newcastle, they had all united with Moray, Lethington, and Bothwell, in the band against Darnley. Morton's assertion that "the Queen was the doer thereof," will scarcely outweigh his repeated statement that "the reason he would not personally assist in the deed-doing was because no warrant for it could be procured from her," and Douglas's corroborating testimony, "that she would hear no speech of it."[1]

The subtle attempts of the traitors in Mary's cabinet to stimulate her to vindictive measures against her husband, by the alarming and irritating reports they had circulated of the conspiracy into which he and his father had entered for deposing her, crowning the infant Prince, and governing her realm under the shadow of his name, had failed. Her Ministers, in their malignant zeal against their declared enemy, Darnley, proceeded to the audacious length of drawing up a warrant for his arrest and incarceration as a state prisoner; they presented it to the Queen for

[1] Archibald Douglas's Letter to Queen Mary.

her signature, but she refused to sign it.[1] It was found impossible to induce her to do anything that might prove a final bar to their reconciliation. In this she acted the part of a forbearing wife, and betrayed the lingering fondness of that enduring love which neither the unworthiness nor the unkindness of its object could eradicate. Whenever the faults of her truant were reported in his disparagement, and she was urged to take, at least, cautionary measures for her own safety and that of her realm, by putting it out of his power to do further mischief, she was wont to reply, "As to the follies of the King my husband, he is but young, and may be reclaimed. If he has been led into evil measures, it is to be attributed to his want of better counsel, the influence of bad company, and his too great facility of temper in yielding to those about him,"—always concluding with the hope "that God would in his own good time put remedy, and amend what was amiss in him."[2] However grievous the remembrance of his trespasses might be, Mary knew he loved her—not wisely, indeed, or in a manner calculated to contribute to her peace; for like a petulant spoiled child, he quarrelled when he could not have everything his own way, and absented himself in hopes of being wooed to return, yet was no less miserable during his self-inflicted absences than he rendered her.

A fragment has been preserved of a quaint poem from Darnley's pen; and it is impossible to doubt, from the sentiments expressed in the following lines, which may serve as a sample of his literary talent, that it was addressed to Queen Mary herself, and no other:—

"The turtle for her mate
More *dule* may not endure,
Than I do for her sake
Who has mine heart in *cure*;[3]
My heart which shall be *sure*[4]
With service to the deed,

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[1] Depositions of Thomas Crawford—State Paper Office MS.
[2] Mackenzie's Lives. Freebairn's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.
[3] Keeping. [4] Faithful, certain.

Unto that lady pure,
The weal of womanhood.
. . . . .
Yet no mirth, till we meet,
Shall cause me be content,
But still my heart lament,
In sorrowful sighing sore,
Till that time she's present.
Farewell, I say no more,
Quoth King Henry Stuart."[1]

These verses indicate that Darnley had something to recommend him besides his external graces, and that, when he condescended to play the lover, he could do so with that tenderness and depth of feeling which is seldom resisted by a woman of sensibility. Hence the facility with which his royal wife was won to reconciliation, after his frequent derelictions from his duty. No one was better qualified, from a similarity of pursuits and tastes, than she to appreciate his poetic genius and general accomplishments. Nothing, surely, but his irritable temperament, and fatal propensity to drinking, together with the wickedness of the cruel incendiaries who laboured to create divisions between two hearts so well calculated to beat in unison, can account for their domestic infelicity. The following testimony is borne by one of their royal son's English prelates to the learning and literary attainments of this unfortunate pair:—

"The King's father, Lord Darnley, translated Valerius Maximus, and Queen Mary his mother wrote a book of verses in French, of the "Institution of a Prince," and wrought the cover of it with her needle, all with her own hand, and this book is now esteemed by his Majesty James I. as a most precious jewel."[2]

The poetic talent which Mary and Darnley possessed in common with the Princes of the royal house of Stuart, first appeared in their accomplished ancestor James I. of Scotland, and was probably inherited by him from his mother, Queen Annabella Drummond, a name afterwards highly distinguished by the bard of Hawthornden.

[1] Walpole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors—also quoted by the learned Geo. Chalmers in his Poetical Works of the Kings of Scotland.
[2] Preface to King James's Works, by the Bishop of Winchester.

Darnley's verses are without date, but the peculiar tone in which they are couched leaves little doubt as to the period when they were written. The conjecture may even be hazarded that they were, through the friendly agency of Queen Mary's physician, sent to her from Glasgow, together with those assurances of her husband's contrition for his offences, and his earnest desire to see her, which inspired her with the generous impulse of undertaking that long fatiguing journey, in the depth of a Scottish winter, to cheer him with her presence. The eager craving of poor Darnley, on the bed of sickness, for the company of her whom he had been wont to desert for days and weeks together, to pursue a career of vicious folly, or to indulge his sullen humour, shows that he had no just cause of complaint against her, no mistrust of her. He had said "she was a true Princess, and he would stake his life on her fidelity of word and deed"—and he was ready to do so. He had proved her cherishing care during his previous maladies, of which he had had his share, during the brief period of his abode in Scotland. She had nursed him in infectious, dangerous illnesses, watched beside his feverish bed, smoothed the pillow for his aching temples, and administered medicine and nourishment to him with her own gentle hands. His Glasgow nurse, whoever she might be, was a hireling; her rude *patois* would be harsh to the ear of the princely sufferer, his courtly Southron phrase unintelligible to her. His servants were attached to him, yet it were vain to expect from them the soft soothing words of love and sympathy, and those sweet offices of unbought affection he had been accustomed to receive from his own royal wife, ere he had outraged her by leaguing with traitors against her, and vexed her with his sullen humours and political jealousy, after her generous forgiveness. The sharp-chastening of the terrific malady which had conducted him to the verge of the grave, had apparently convinced him of his faults, produced compunction for his ingratitude, taught him the value of her love, and inclined him to make all due submission in order to obtain the solace of her presence. "It was not every wife," as Du Croc had, on his previous

perverse withdrawal from her conjugal society, significantly remarked to him, "who would be thus compliant with his requisitions, but there was no cause to doubt the goodness of the Queen."[1] Buchanan testifies "that she wrote many kind letters to Darnley,"[2] citing that fact as evidence of her deceit; and sneeringly observes "that the Queen made her arrangements for her journey to Glasgow, and seemed very earnest about it, yet it was put off from day to day." Only one month, however, elapsed between the day Darnley left Stirling and the day Mary arrived in Glasgow to perform her promise of coming in person to bring him to Edinburgh as soon as he should be able to bear the sharp air. Her delay, trifling as it was, may reasonably be imputed to the inclemency of the weather, the state of the roads, and her own delicate and precarious health, which had never been properly re-established since her illness at Jedburgh. Moreover, she held, in the interim, a Court at Holyrood, for the state reception of the Savoyard ambassador, Moretta. That nobleman had been expected at the baptism of the infant Prince, where he should have represented his Sovereign as one of the godfathers, but from some cause did not arrive till five weeks after it was solemnised. He came, however, in proper time to assist the Queen in eliciting the truth in a perplexing dispute among her Italian servants, originating in the fraudulent conduct of her Foreign Secretary, Joseph Riccio, the unworthy brother and successor of poor David in that confidential office. Signor Joseph, who appears to have been a secretary of the class depicted by the lively pen of Le Sage, in the character of Gil Blas, had been borrowing money of a usurer, whom he calls by the poetic name of Timoteo—in plain Scotch or English, Timothy—and this money he had raised on the credit of his countryman and friend, Joseph Lutini, a gentleman in the Queen's household, to whom she had granted leave to revisit his own country, and, in a letter dated Jan. 6, recommended for a safe-conduct and civil treatment to the Eng-

[1] Letter of Du Croc to the Queen-mother of France, in Teulet, Pièces et Documens.

[2] History of Scotland.

lish deputy at Berwick.[1] Timothy had lent a hundred crowns on the security of Lutini's personals and his horses, which Joseph Riccio had assured him were left behind in his care, as a pledge for the repayment of that loan. Now Joseph Lutini had left nothing but a long tailor's bill, and it was found on inquiry that there were no effects of his in Scotland to liquidate it. This led to a discovery of Joseph Riccio's tricks, and Timothy appealed to the Queen for justice. Mary had from childhood the greatest contempt for anything of a mean dishonest nature, and was very particular in keeping her foreign servants from committing themselves, and bringing reproach on her by derelictions from the moral law. So Joseph Riccio, in order to escape from the certain disgrace in which the exposure of his fraud might involve him, thought proper to aggravate his fault by shifting the blame on the absent Lutini, declaring "that he had robbed him of a large sum, and decamped with the money." In the midst of the discussion which ensued in the royal presence, the Queen recollected that she had herself sustained a serious loss—a pair of her costly bracelets having mysteriously disappeared, for which she considered Joseph Riccio accountable. It is probable that she had taken them off for the convenience of writing when she was alone with him in her cabinet, and that he, being essentially dishonest, had not been able to resist the temptation of pocketing such valuable jewels. At all events, her suspicions being excited by the accusations of fraud that were brought against him, and his lame defence, she turned sharply upon him and exclaimed, "Where are my bracelets?" Alarmed at this stern query, Joseph Riccio replied, "In Lutini's purse, I suppose, with my money, which he has carried away with him." Every one present raised a murmur of indignation at the wickedness and treachery of Lutini. Bastian observed "that he had borrowed sixty crowns of him," and all united in saying he ought to be sent for back, to answer for these things, on which the Queen commanded Lethington to write to Sir William Drury, requesting him to arrest Lutini at Berwick,

[1] Scotch Correspondence—State Paper Office.

and send him back to her. This sensible and straightforward proceeding of the Queen put Joseph Riccio in a far worse case than he had been before, and induced him, as a last desperate resource, to write to his injured friend, confessing the false witness he had borne against him, and imploring him, "for the honour of their country and the love of God, to confirm what he had said, and not to ruin him by exposing his deceit." The late learned historian of Scotland, Mr P. Fraser Tytler, misconceiving the idiomatic Italian of Joseph Riccio's letter, has hazarded a conjecture that the mysterious circumstances there alluded to had some connection with the plot for Darnley's murder; it therefore becomes necessary to demonstrate, from a literal translation of the document printed in his appendix, how greatly he has been deceived in fancying it applied to anything of greater moment than the private chicanery of Joseph Riccio, and his desire to conceal his knavery from the Queen. The details are valuable, as affording an amusing peep of everyday life behind the scenes of the tragic Court of Holyrood, at this exciting period, and displaying the fair Sovereign herself in the character of a domestic judge, graciously listening to the appeals of humble individuals among her household band, but resolutely determined not to condemn an absent person unheard, and taking prompt measures for confronting the accuser and the accused—a measure of justice which she afterwards vainly demanded in her own case.

LETTER, FROM THE ITALIAN, OF JOSEPH RICCIO TO JOSEPH LUTINI.[1]

"I have told the Queen and Timoteo that you have taken away my money; and the reason I said it you shall hear. When we returned from Stirling, Timoteo asked, 'Where your horses and personal property were?' I said, 'Your personals were in your coffers.' Lorenzo Cagnoli had told him that you had taken all away with you, together with your horses; moreover, that you had said to him, 'I have finely deluded the Secretary, because he thinks my goods are in my coffers; but there is not anything there.' When Timoteo heard this, he began to say, 'So you have deceived me, Mr Secretary, but the Queen will do me justice!' and forthwith he sought Bastian, and made him tell the Queen 'that I had

[1] Labanoff's Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart.

become surety, that you were going on affairs, on which he lent me one hundred crowns,' when all began to exclaim 'there was something very wrong in it, and that I knew you had been meddling with the Queen's papers.' Then I, who would not be suspected, began to say 'that you had carried away from me six Portuguese doubloons and five nobles, and you had promised to leave me your horses [in pledge].' Then the Queen suddenly demanded of me, 'Where are my bracelets?' and I said 'that you had carried them with you, and that they were within the purse with my money.' Bastian then said, 'that you owed him sixty francs,' and all declared 'you ought to be sent after;' therefore the Queen commanded Lethington to write a letter for you to be arrested on the way. In the midst of it all, M. de Moretta arrived here, who said 'you had informed him that I had caused you to undertake this journey.'"[1]

The rest of the letter is filled up with entreaties of Joseph Riccio to his friend Lutini to adopt, on his examination, all the misrepresentations "with which he had loaded his character—conjuring him by their former intimacy so to do, as he should be ruined if the Queen detected any discrepancy when he was questioned." In his postscript, Joseph Riccio earnestly beseeches Lutini to burn his letter—a desire that was not complied with; for instead of reaching the person for whom it was intended, it fell into the hands of Sir William Drury, the Marshal of Berwick, on whom the hint that Lutini was suspected of having been handling Queen Mary's papers was not lost. He fancied something might be got out of Lutini to her disadvantage, or that a political use might be made of him in some way or other; and therefore, instead of complying with her request that he might be sent to Edinburgh without delay, he constituted him a prisoner at Berwick, and transmitted to Cecil both Joseph Riccio's letter and that written by Lethington.[2] In spite of the reiterated demands of Queen Mary for Lutini's delivery to her authorities, he was actually detained at Berwick till the end of February. But nothing could be elicited from him calculated to injure his royal mistress.[3] The sequel of the affair, and how the two Josephs sped, will be related in the proper order of chronology. Events

[1] The Queen's letter to Drury to stop Lutini on the journey to England is dated January 17, 1566-7; and this of Joseph Riccio to Lutini two days later.

[2] State Paper MSS., January 23, 1566-7.

[3] Drury to Cecil, February 7; Drury to Lethington; Drury to Cecil, February 28—Border Correspondence.

of strange and startling import to Mary occurred in the interim.

The object of Moretta's visit—to outward appearance, the performance of the empty ceremony of offering a polite excuse on the part of the Duke of Savoy for his non-attendance at the baptism of Mary's infant son—involved more than met the public eye. It was in reality a secret Papal mission from all the Roman Catholic powers and principalities in Europe, of whom the Duke of Savoy was one of the most zealous agents, urging her to join their combination for the suppression of heresy, and to stand forth as the ostensible head of the Roman Catholic party in Britain. If Mary could have been induced to do this, the flames of a religious war would immediately have been kindled in England, Scotland, and Ireland. She and Darnley would have been proclaimed joint-Sovereigns of Great Britain by their united partisans, involving at least a third of the people of England, and an overwhelming majority in Ireland. Money and troops would have been sent to her assistance from Spain, and she would have been placed in a position to contest with Elizabeth the possession of the throne, to which her reversionary claims were as yet unrecognised. It was this position Darnley desired her to assume. Mary had seen enough of the horrors of the religious struggle in France to deter her from disturbing the congregational worship of Scotland; all she desired was, toleration for herself and her Roman Catholic subjects; or, to use her own words, "that all men might be permitted to serve God according to their own consciences"[1] —a sentiment too enlightened for the age, and scarcely more agreeable to the persecuted than to the persecutors.

Darnley, after playing fast and loose with the Protestant party in Scotland—silencing Knox, burning the Psalm-book, and threatening the lives of the political leaders of that powerful body—when he cut the connection with them for ever, had identified his cause with the Church in which he had been nurtured, and determined to go all lengths for her re-establishment both in England and Scotland. He was in correspondence with the Pope, and the Pope had

[1] Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland.

sent him money,[1] though, in consequence of the opposition of winds and waves, it had fallen into other hands; but the fact that it had been intended for him was a sufficient note of the estimation in which he was held at Rome. Everything might indeed be expected from his influence over the mind of the Queen if they became firmly reconciled, and he could be taught to regard their interests as inseparable, and indissolubly united with those of their Church.

[1] Bannatyne's Memorials.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXIX.

SUMMARY

True date of Queen Mary's departure from Edinburgh verified—She goes to Glasgow to see Darnley—Met on the road by Lennox's man, Crawford—Crawford delivers his lord's message to the Queen—Her reply—Reconciliation between the Queen and Darnley—Their conversations—Darnley objects to go to Craigmillar Castle—Queen writes to Lethington to procure other lodgings—Glaring falsehoods in the forged letters—Darnley leaves Glasgow with her—Particulars of their journey—Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field chosen for Darnley's lodging by the conspirators in Mary's Cabinet—Salubrity of the situation—Queen brings Darnley there—False witness of Nelson about the beds—Inventory of some of the furniture in Darnley's chamber in the Provost's house—Description of his bed—Queen's affectionate attention to Darnley—Their renewed regard for each other—Alarming hints of the Lord Robert Stuart to Darnley of the plot against his life—The Queen requires Lord Robert to explain his meaning—He denies having told Darnley—Their quarrel—Mutual violence—Proceedings of the conspirators—The Earl of Moray's astute policy—Day fixed for the murder of Darnley—Queen promises to give a masked ball at Holyrood in honour of Bastian and Margaret Carwood's nuptials—Her gifts to both.

QUEEN MARY remained in Edinburgh, according to the evidence of the regal records, transacting business, from Tuesday, January 14, 1566-7, till Friday, January 24.[1] On the last-named day she signed a warrant appointing James Inglis tailor to the Prince her son; and a precept confirming a gift of lands in life-rent, to contribute to the weal and comfort of a newly-wedded pair, James Boyd of

[1] Privy Council Record. Privy Seal Register. Registers of Signatures. Goodall. Chalmers.

Trogrig, and Margaret Chalmer his bride;[1] incidents which might be deemed beneath the dignity of history to notice, if the dates of the contemporary records that attest them did not verify the fact that the Queen was in her own palace of Holyrood on the days when the first of the vile letters she is accused of writing to Bothwell from Glasgow is represented as commencing, continuing, and concluding—thus combining, with other strong circumstances, to prove the spurious nature of the whole series, and with them to overthrow the structure of false witness of which they form the keystone.[2] The precise date of Mary's departure from Edinburgh, and her subsequent arrival in Glasgow, have, it is true, been variously stated by contemporary authorities. Birrel's Diary, and the Diary of Occurrents, both give Jan. 20th as the day on which she left Edinburgh. Moray's journal says "the 21st, and that she arrived at Glasgow on the 23d."[3] Sir William Drury, in a letter to Cecil,[4] dated Jan. 23d, says—"The Lord Darnley lieth sick of the small-pox at Glasgow, unto whom the Queen came yesterday;" but as Drury dates from Berwick, he could only speak from

[1] Goodall, vol. i. p. 120-21. Chalmers.

[2] Robertson, in a futile attempt to discredit the simple matter-of-fact evidence afforded by the dates of Mary's Privy Seal Registers, her Grants and Precepts, as to her whereabout, affirms "that he had discovered a grant to Archibald Edmonstone in the Register of Signatures, folio 16, purporting to be "subscribed by our Sovereigns the King and Queen at Edinburgh, Jan. 24, 1567," and exultingly observes "that this might in like manner be alleged as a proof that Darnley was in Edinburgh as well as Mary on that day, when every one knows he was in his sick-bed at Glasgow." In a marginal note to his next page, however, he testifies to the existence of "a document to which Darnley's regal signature had been affixed by means of the fac-simile stamp mentioned by Buchanan"—an expedient for executing papers requiring their joint signatures to which the Queen had been early compelled to have recourse, during Darnley's long and frequent absences from the post of duty, or all business must have stood still. "The stamp was always affixed in her presence," we are told, "after she had signed;" therefore the grant to Archibald Edmonstone, discovered by Robertson, affords an additional voucher that the Queen was in Edinburgh on the day specified. Robertson also notices that there are various papers bearing Queen Mary's signature, dated at Edinburgh, at the time she was detained by Bothwell at Dunbar; but this only indicates the fact that some of her Ministers were in the habit of forging her signature, and those who were able to achieve that feat possessed the power of imitating her handwriting for other purposes. But of course they would not have forged a profitable grant in favour of Margaret Chalmer and her husband, Margaret being one of the Queen's Roman Catholic clients. [3] Anderson's Collections.

[4] State Paper Office MS., Border Correspondence.

report; and again he says, later in the same day—"Unto whom I hear the Queen intendeth to go, and bring him away as soon as he can bear the cold air."[1]

A very considerable outlay in the article of gunpowder might have been spared, as well as the lives of three gentlemen, and two harmless boys, their servants, who perished in the house of Kirk-of-Field, and all the horrors and publicity attending a melodramatic murder, if Mary had been less anxious to preserve her sick husband from the inimical effects of that cold air, which, to a person in his circumstances, would have been no less formidable than the poniard of an assassin. Every one who understands the nature of the malady, and the severity of the climate of Edinburgh, must be aware that the premature removal of a Southron patient, newly convalesced of the small-pox, from the soft mild valley of Glasgow to the sharp temperature of a place situated like Edinburgh, would be at the imminent risk of life; and that if he were either lodged in the damp low palace of Holyrood, or on the bleak heights of the castled rock, when enveloped in its mid-winter mantle of chilling mists, a fatal inflammation of the lungs, windpipe, or throat, would be the probable result. But Mary, in order to avoid these dangers, had decided on not bringing her husband into Edinburgh till he should be sufficiently recovered to bear the cutting winds or the still more noxious fogs of Auld Reekie. She had caused the pleasant suite of apartments lately occupied by herself at Craigmillar Castle to be prepared for his reception, with baths, and every comfort requisite for him to go through the course of medicine which the physicians judged necessary for the purification of his system, after that loathsome cutaneous malady the small-pox. No place could be better chosen than Craigmillar Castle for such a purpose—quiet, cheerful, sunny, and salubrious in situation, sheltered from the bleak winds, the sea fogs, and the smoke of Edinburgh, and yet within sight and an easy distance of everything going on there. Such were the arrangements made by the Queen,

[1] State Paper Office MS., Border Correspondence, quoted by Chalmers in his Memoir of Darnley. Life of the Scottish Queen.

in the first instance, before she set out to fetch him from Glasgow; and she provided also for his performing the journey with the least possible fatigue, taking with her her own litter for his use, that mode of travelling being much easier than a wheeled carriage.[1]

Let common sense decide the natural question whether these prudential and considerate cares were dictated by a desire of preserving or extinguishing the feeble spark of life that still lingered in the emaciated frame of the man she had loved so fondly, and whom she had received and forgiven every time he turned to her saying, "I repent." But even if Mary had been less placably disposed towards her erring but repentant consort, a reconciliation and unity of purpose between them was especially required at this time by the policy of the Church of Rome—a power to which both were submissive, though not in like degree; for Mary, however devoted in her own practice, had not been as yet induced to violate in her public acts the solemn pledge she had given to her Reformed subjects; while Darnley was ready to run all lengths to re-establish the Mass in Scotland. Moretta, the Savoyard Ambassador, was accompanied by Father Edmonds, the Principal of the Society of Jesuits; and the presence of those deep-seeing witnesses in Edinburgh at this momentous crisis, affords a strong presumption that there was nothing blameworthy in Mary's conduct to her consort, nor unbecoming in her demeanour to Bothwell. The hostility of Bothwell to the Church of Rome would naturally have caused him to be regarded with an unfriendly eye by the zealous emissaries of that Church; and there can be no doubt that Mary would have been subjected to the sternest censures from the Pope, and her uncles, the Cardinals of Lorraine and Guise, if there had been the slightest reason for suspecting her of preferring the perverse heretic Bothwell to the orthodox Darnley, much more of conspiring to destroy an obedient son of the Church in order to espouse its enemy. The correspondence of Father Edmonds with Cardinal Laurea testifies that all the hopes of the Church of Rome in Scotland

[1] Nelson's Deposition—in Anderson.

were annihilated with Darnley; blaming, however, the Queen for nothing except her temporising policy in not adventuring to go the whole lengths prescribed to her by the head of her Church, and which Darnley desired her to go.[1]

Mary left Edinburgh on the afternoon of January 24, and proceeded no farther than Callander, the abode of her faithful Protestant friends, Lord and Lady Livingstone, where she supped and slept that night. According to the statement of Moray's Journal, she was accompanied by the Earls of Huntley and Bothwell;[2] and even if this were so, it would afford no evidence of impropriety on her part, for Huntley was her Lord Chancellor, and Bothwell one of her Cabinet, and, as Sheriff of the Lothians, it was his duty to escort and guard her on her way; but on that identical 24th of January he departed from Edinburgh into Liddesdale,[3] it appears, from the showing of said journal, quite in a different direction. Queen Mary proceeded next morning, January 25, on her journey towards Glasgow, with a numerous retinue, being convoyed by Lord Livingstone and his followers, and the Hamiltons. Other gentlemen of loyal principles came to meet her on the road, which so increased her train that her escort at last amounted to upwards of five hundred horsemen. She travelled the whole day, and when within a few miles of Glasgow encountered Captain Thomas Crawford, a person in the service of the Earl of Lennox,[4] who had sent him to present his humble commendations to her Majesty, "with his excuses for not coming to meet her in person, praying her Grace not to think it was either from pride or ignorance of his duty, but because he was indisposed at that time, and also would not presume to come in her presence until he knew farther her mind, because of the sharp words she had spoken of him to Robert Cunningham his

[1] Labanoff's Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart.

[2] Anderson's Collections.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Report of Crawford's Depositions before the English Commissioners, endorsed by Cecil—State Paper Office MS. The late historian of Scotland, P. Fraser Tytler, has fallen into an unaccountable mistake, calculated to prejudice his readers seriously against Queen Mary, by affirming that Crawford was in Darnley's service, and came with this message from him, instead of from his father, the Earl of Lennox, with whom she was justly displeased.

servant, in Stirling, whereby he thought he was in her Majesty's displeasure." Lennox having written to his son at the time of the baptism of the Prince, urging him, "as he was made small account of by the Queen, to leave her and come to him,"[1] it is probable that Cunningham was the accredited bearer of the letter, and that she expressed herself warmly on the subject of her father-in-law's improper interference between her husband and herself. All her matrimonial misery had been caused, she had bitter reason to be aware, by the pernicious counsels of that selfish and ambitious traitor, who had repaid all her benefits by conspiring against her life and government, and continuing to oppose his baleful influence between his son and her. She had been magnanimous enough to refrain from punishing him, but she would not condescend to dissemble her contempt; and in reply to his message by Crawford, she briefly observed, "There is no receipt against fear." "My Lord hath no fear for anything he knows in himself," rejoined Crawford, "but only of the cold and unkind words you have spoken to his servant."[2] "He would not be afraid unless he were culpable," said the Queen. "I know so far of his Lordship," retorted Crawford, "that he desires nothing more than that the secrets of every creature's heart were written in their face." The Queen reminded him of his presumption in replying to her in his own person by the brief query, "Have you any further commission?" "No," said Crawford. "Then hold your peace," she haughtily rejoined, and closed the conference by riding on to Glasgow. Crawford had his revenge. He was, according to his own account of himself, a busy-body and a mischief-maker, a spy instructed by his master, the Earl of Lennox, to lurk in Glasgow Castle for the honourable purpose of communicating to him every particular that could be elicited of what passed between Darnley and the Queen during their conjugal interviews.[3] What warrant have we that he reported truly "the intelligence" he affirmed that he received from Darnley, "and com-

[1] Buchanan. [2] Crawford's Deposition—State Paper Office MS. [3] Ibid.

mitted to writing as opportunity served?" Neither Darnley's attendants nor Mary's followers witnessed the first gush of natural feeling with which the lately jarring but now reconciled pair met in the alcoved recess of Darnley's sick-chamber.

It was not till the evening of January 25 that Mary arrived from her long fatiguing journey through bad roads and wintry weather; her ride from Callander to Glasgow being somewhat more of an undertaking, in hoar January, than her October gallop from Jedburgh to Hermitage Castle. Her first interview with Darnley did not take place by daylight; and the obscurity would be so far favourable to him, as to conceal, in some measure, the disfiguring traces of the malady. He was not much marked, however, though he had been very full of the irruption, which was of the malignant purple character; but he had lost all his beautiful hair.[1] The Queen seemed very sorry for his sickness, and told him "she would find remedy therefor so soon as she might." Even those inimical chroniclers, Knox and Buchanan, bear witness to the tender and soothing attentions she lavished on him on her arrival at Glasgow, though they, of course, impute all her kindness to deceit. Crawford, however, in his notes of the conversations that took place in the strictness of conjugal privacy between the royal pair, pretends that, "after the first greeting, sharp, bitter, and reproachful recriminations were exchanged," such as Darnley telling Mary "that his illness was entirely caused by her unkindness" — a notion too absurd, as it was a cutaneous and infectious malady; also that Darnley said, "he was enough punished for making his god of her." Not a word, however, in allusion to the immediate cause of his leaving her at Stirling—of her pardoning Lethington, Morton, and the other assassins of David Riccio. On the contrary, Crawford makes him complain "of her constantly leaving him;"—and this Darnley could not have done, because Mary never did leave him, the desertions being invariably on his side, which she would naturally

[1] Lord Herries's Fragmentary Memoir, edited by Pitcairn.

have represented, in reply to an accusation so opposed to truth—had he really made it.

Great weight has, nevertheless, been attached to the evidence of Thomas Crawford by writers who, taking either a superficial or prejudiced view of the character of Mary Stuart, ground their assertions of her guilt on the gross follies contained in the supposititious letters pretended to have been written by her to Bothwell. This deposition coincides most remarkably with the details of the private conversations between the Queen and her husband, as related in the first letter of that series. The coincidence is indeed at first sight startling, and appears like an English version of the commencement of the same document, revised and condensed into a less theatrical style by the careful hand of the clear-headed English Secretary. On comparing the depositions with the letter, this coincidence becomes suspicious from its very minuteness, the evident result of over-careful study to make them correspond. They correspond too closely to be genuine, unless the minutes of the conversations they pretend to repeat had been taken down in shorthand on the spot by both. There is about as much truth in the one as the other; that is to say, a few leading facts connected with Mary's journey, and allusions to her late investigations of the vexatious reports circulated by Hiegate and Walear, amalgamated with a great deal of malignant falsehood tending to her prejudice, and devised for the express purpose of imputing to her crimes, of which it was impossible to bring forward a single credible witness to testify against her in her whole realm of Scotland. Two letters of the Earl of Lennox are preserved among the archives of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton,—one addressed "to the Earl of Moray, Lord Regent of Scotland," the other "to his trusty servants, Thomas Crawford, Robert Cuningham, and John Stuart of Periven," which clearly convict him of suborning this evidence, as far as it goes, against his royal daughter-in-law, and also of an earnest desire that a case of poisoning might be made out against her. In his letter to the Earl of Moray, dated Chiswick, 11th of June 1568, directly after Mary's arrival in England, after calling

her "the destroyer of all his friends and servants, of which," he says, "there is sufficiency in her own hand-writ by the faith of her letters to condemn her," he would have them "by all possible means search for more matters, not only against her, but against all those who had come to England with her, and to devise by what means the articles he had sent them might be made out." 1st, "The manner of the Queen's discord with the King before the baptism; the manner of his coming to Glasgow, of his falling sick there, the occasion of his sickness—whether it appeared to be poison; and who were his mediciners?" On these points Lennox could have given the best information himself, seeing that Darnley came to him direct from Stirling, and of course told him all his grievances, whether proceeding from the Queen or her Ministers. The manner of Darnley's sickness he had no occasion to inquire of Moray, since it occurred under his own roof at Glasgow; nor to ask people sixty miles from the place to describe symptoms, when he had watched over them with his own eyes; neither to inquire who were the physicians, whom he had seen every day for nearly a month, in attendance on his son. The leading points in Crawford's deposition are suggested, and afford convincing evidence that the notes taken by him were not, as he swore, "made for the information of Lennox," but supplied by Lennox to be produced as evidence of the Queen's unkindness to her husband, in corroboration of the statements pretended to be made by her in the love-letters. They are as follows: "The manner of Hiegate's speaking, and discourse at Stirling; the time of the Queen's arrival at Glasgow, the company that came with her, and what discourse Thomas Crawford held with her at her coming to the town; how long she remained there with the King; her usage and custom to entertain the King; if she used to send any messages to Edinburgh, by whom; and what women were in her company, or in her chamber, at that time."[1] All these things Lennox, who kept his chamber in Glasgow Castle, under the plea of sickness, while the Queen was there, must have known better than any one else, both by the report of

[1] Hamilton Papers, No. 23.

his servants, and messages from his son, and also, if there be any truth in Crawford's deposition, from the notes which he swore he jotted down of the things Darnley communicated to him. But why did not Crawford repeat them by word of mouth to the Earl of Lennox? Crawford says, because "the Earl of Lennox was not there." If that were the case, he becomes an unintentional witness of the forgery of the Queen's pretended letters to Bothwell, in the first of which she is feigned to write: "This day his father bled at the mouth and nose; guess what presage that is. I have not yet seen him; he keeps his chamber."[1] And again, in the same letter, repeats, "His father keeps his chamber; I have not seen him."[2]

The other five principal heads or counts on which Lennox exhorts Moray to exert his ingenuity "in making out"—to supply evidence against the Queen, and his foe, Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, whom he desired to include in the accusation of his son's murder—have no connection with Crawford, but refer to her journey to Edinburgh and the house of Kirk-of-Field, and "his desire that the sayings of some of her servants might be reported." Much to the honour of her household it was that not a single witness, male or female, was ever brought against her, nor even a tittle of *ex parte* evidence could be elicited to her disparagement from them or their familiars—a case without parallel, where accusations of so gross a nature have been brought against a lady. In the concluding item of Lennox's instructions to Moray, he exhorts him "to draw all arguments and proofs that might be against the Lord Herries, Lord Fleming, Lord Livingstone, Lord Claud Hamilton, and all those then in England, with everything that could be said of Bothwell's familiarity with the Queen before the murder, at the time and after."[3] In the absence of proofs, calumnies and vituperations were lavishly employed, and nothing left unsaid that could tend, by blackening the Queen, to further the political views of the actual usurpers of her government, and their dupe and tool the Earl of Lennox; but what occasion for these unworthy

[1] Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 136. [2] Ibid., p. 142. [3] Ibid.

tricks and collusions, if she had really been the gross and shameless monster they describe? A crowd of witnesses, in that case, would have been produced to bear testimony of her deeds.

Although it is impossible for anything to be more suspicious than Crawford's deposition becomes, when collated with the list of hints in Lennox's letter to Moray, of "points necessary to be made out against the Queen," there are, apparently, as in the supposititious silver-casket letters, a sufficient number of facts intermixed with the fictions to make the latter pass current. Thus, according to the statements in both, the royal pair conversed together on the subject of the agitating reports, so nearly touching themselves, that had lately been investigated by the Privy Council, traced to Walcar and Hiegate, and proved by the Queen herself, before she left Edinburgh, to be without foundation; also the Queen inquired of her husband the real particulars of the tale which had been brought to him that she intended to put him in ward, and that Darnley made the following natural reply: "The Laird of Minto told me 'that a letter was presented to you at Craigmillar, made, as he said, by your device, and subscribed by certain others, who desired you to subscribe the same, which you refused to do;' and I could never believe that you, who are my own proper flesh, would do me any hurt; and if any other would do it, they should buy it dear, unless they took me sleeping." [1] Then he desired her earnestly to bear him company, adding, "that she ever found some ado to draw herself from him to her own lodging, and would never abide with him more than two hours at a time." [2] This was probably true, for Mary had, of course, duties as a Sovereign to perform, which could not be transacted in the infected chamber of her sick husband. Besides the daily routine of signing and considering papers, letters, and petitions, she had to attend

[1] Crawford's Deposition before the English Commissioners at York, endorsed by Cecil. There is clearly an allusion here, either to the warrant which Mary had been requested by Moray and her other ministers to subscribe, or to the bond drawn by Sir James Balfour for his murder, which Archibald Douglas mentions in his letter to the Queen.

[2] Crawford's Deposition—State Paper MS.

to all the appeals and suits that poured in upon her as soon as her arrival in Glasgow was known, and she had also to receive all the nobility and gentry, both male and female, of the west country, who came to pay their devoir to her. To prevent exposing these and her own personal suite to the immediate contagion of the small-pox, and also, perhaps, because she distrusted the Earl of Lennox, who was in Glasgow Castle with his son, she took up her abode with her ladies and numerous attendants in the Archbishop's Palace, distant about a hundred yards from the castle.[1] Darnley, according to Crawford's statement, was annoyed at her occupying different lodgings from himself, and importuned her to share his own apartment, "or else," said he, "I desire never to rise forth of this bed."[2] Mary replied "that he must first be cleansed from the effects of his malady by a course of medicine and bathing," such being the practice of the physicians after the small-pox at that period, for purifying the system from what was considered its dregs. She then informed him "that preparations had been made for his going through this sanitary process at Craigmillar, where she might be with him, and not far from her son;" adding "that she had brought a litter with her, that he might travel more softly." Darnley replied "that he would go with her wheresoever she pleased, on condition that they should be together at bed and board, and live like husband and wife once more." She answered "that her coming was only to that effect; and if she had not been minded thereto, she had not come so far to fetch him; promised it should be as he desired," and gave him her hand upon it, and the faith of her body, "that she would love him as well as ever." Then he promised "to do whatever she would have him do, and to love all she loved."[3] No reconciliation, therefore, could be more perfect, or resemble more the making up of a lover's quarrel, than this was, even from the showing of the inimical deponent, who, by his own account, commenced the unhallowed work of an incendiary forthwith, by labouring to kindle fresh sparks of discontent in Darnley's mind as

[1] Whitaker. [2] Crawford's Deposition. [3] Ibid., State Paper MS.

soon as they were alone together, telling him "he liked not the Queen's purpose of taking him to Craigmillar Castle, for if she desired his company, she would take him to his own house in Edinburgh;" for Crawford artfully flattered the pride of Darnley by thus styling Mary's royal palace of Holyrood, where assuredly, if she had been really desirous of shortening his days, she would have carried him, as the most likely place in her realm to bring them quickly to a close. What would Buchanan, who has accused Mary of intending to cause the death of her fine healthy boy by bringing him from Stirling Castle to the "damp sunless marsh of Holyrood," as he terms it, have said, had she been so inconsiderate as to transfer her husband from the mild air of Glasgow, immediately after he had had the small-pox, to so unsuitable a temperature, besides the risk of carrying the infection to the infant heir of the realm? The fact is a plain one, that, surrounded as Mary was by traitors, who were leagued for her ruin, whatever she did would have been turned to her reproach: the very precautions she took to prevent her sick husband from being visited by the winds of heaven too rudely, were perverted by his murderers into evidences of her malice against him. Her arrangements for his temporary residence in Craigmillar Castle were certainly traversed by the inimical influence of Lennox's emissary Crawford, who told Darnley "that it was his opinion that the Queen, if she carried him to Craigmillar Castle, would take him away more like a prisoner than a husband."[1] This insinuation, combined with the previous alarming reports that she intended to put him in ward, and the association, perhaps, of Craigmillar Castle with the tragic fate of James III.'s unfortunate brother, Alexander Earl of Mar, rendered Darnley uneasy, and he observed "that he should entertain some fears himself, were it not for the confidence he had in the Queen's promises;" according to Crawford's statement, he added, "that he would put himself in her hands, and go with her, though she were to cut his throat." But Darnley was very unlikely to use such expressions of his royal wife

[1] Ibid., State Paper Office MS.

in the first moments of renewed affection, after she had given him convincing proofs of her tender and forgiving nature, by undertaking that long fatiguing journey in compliance with his desire to see her. Besides, he knew full well that Mary was not addicted to cutting throats, for it was with the greatest difficulty she had been induced by himself to consent that justice should take its course on two of the assassins of Riccio, and she had excited his anger by her too great clemency in pardoning all the rest. It was not Mary whom Darnley suspected, but all her Ministers. "He had promised," Crawford says, "to go with her whithersoever she chose;" yet it is certain that he refused to go to Craigmillar, and that Mary, though she had it in her power to have carried him thither without his consent, indulgently gave up her original plan to humour him.[1] Darnley's servant Nelson testified before the English Council, "that it was first devised in Glasgow that the King should have lain at Craigmillar; but because he had no will thereof, the purpose was altered, and conclusion taken that he should lie beside the Kirk-of-Field."[2]

Thus the fact is clearly verified, that Mary, when she left Edinburgh and arrived in Glasgow, had no intention of placing her husband in the house of Kirk-of-Field, which was an arrangement subsequently made by the conspirators themselves, in consequence of his refusal to go to Craigmillar Castle. The objections suggested by Crawford to his being taken to that really well-chosen abode, chimed in with his repugnance to the castellan, Sir Simon de Preston, Provost of Edinburgh, the brother-in-law and creature of Lethington, of whose treachery he had acquired dearly-purchased knowledge at the time of his fatal confederacy in the conspiracy for David Riccio's murder; and as he had kept no terms with any member of that party since, and least of all with Lethington, it was only natural for him to conclude after the return of Morton, the ringleader of that enterprise, with the formidable gang of accomplices in that

[1] Chalmers. Goodall. Anderson's Collections.

[2] Nelson was taken out alive from among the ruins of the house of Kirk-of-Field. His deposition is preserved in the State Paper Office.

deed, that neither his life nor that of the Queen would be safe two miles out of Edinburgh, under Preston's roof. With the exception, however, of his prudential refusal to go to Craigmillar, Darnley appears to have resigned himself to the guidance of his royal wife, and to have repaid her kindness and cherishing attentions with grateful fondness. His lover-like feeling towards her while they were at Glasgow is sneered at by the woman-hater Knox, or his continuator, as "uxoriousness;" while various natural indications of affection, such as his declaration "that he was so overjoyed at her coming that he was ready to die for gladness when he saw her," and his request "that she would give him his nourishment with her own hands, as she had been wont to do in his previous illnesses"—circumstances, of course, well known to their attendants—are artfully woven into the first of the series of letters Mary has been accused of writing to Bothwell. Among the numerous internal evidences of the spurious character of these, the Queen is represented as informing Bothwell "that her husband had generously declared his intention of making no will, but leaving everything to her." Now, it is certain that Mary never wrote this, seeing it was impossible for Darnley to have flattered her with the hope of her deriving the slightest benefit from his obliging intention of dying intestate, since no one had better reason than she to be aware that he had nothing to leave her but his debts. Lennox and he were living on borrowed money when they first came to Scotland,[1] and every penny they had in the world at the time of her marriage with Darnley was derived from her bounty, Queen Elizabeth having sequestered their English property. Mary had raised a host of malcontents by restoring Lennox's forfeitures, but there was no inducing those to whom they had been granted to restore the rents, nor could he have received more than one year's rental himself since their restoration. His estates in Scotland were small at the best; his castles were in ruins, and his estates wasted and encumbered;—so far, therefore, from his being able to

[1] See Randolph's Letters to Cecil, Leicester, and Queen Elizabeth, in the summer of 1565. State Paper Office MSS.

endow his son with anything in the shape of property, he was, in all probability, a constant drain on such pecuniary supplies as were derived from the Queen. Resources of his own Darnley had none, and the very clothes he wore were paid for out of her privy-purse fund. These facts were not unknown to the forgers, but they shrewdly calculated on the ignorance of the majority of Mary's subjects, to whose sympathies and credulity this touching mark of Darnley's kindly feeling towards his wife is addressed. It is clearly for their edification that poor Mary is made to give so shocking an account of her own misbehaviour and cruelty, and his conjugal devotion. Several hundreds of Mary Stuart's genuine letters are now before the public, commencing with those she wrote to her mother in her artless childhood. Not one of these bears the slightest analogy, either in style, sentiment, or diction, with the eight suspicious documents she is alleged to have written. But argument is rendered unnecessary by the fact that the discovery of letters so discrepant with anything ever written, ever said or done, by Mary Stuart, rests solely on the testimony of Morton, one of the conspirators in the murder of Darnley. Such testimony, unsupported by a tittle of evidence, could not be admissible in any court of justice in the world.[1]

[1] Prince Labanoff, who has devoted his life to the collection and verification of Mary Stuart's Letters, rejects this supposititious series, because, as he briefly observes, "there is nothing to prove their authenticity;" while the elder Tytler, who, as a Lord of Session, or judge, had been accustomed to study and collate evidences in the criminal courts of Scotland, has written two able volumes to expose their fallacies, under the title of "A Critical Enquiry into the Evidences." Those who desire to enter fully into the controversy are referred to that work, to Whitaker's "Vindication of Mary Stuart," and Goodall's "Examination of the Letters;" on the other side the question, the Dissertations of Malcolm Laing and Robertson. Dr Henry, the historian of England and Scotland, gave his private and most impartial opinion on this controversy, in a letter to William Tytler, printed in "Transactions of Scottish Antiquarian Society," vol. i. p. 538, in these words: "I have been long convinced that the unfortunate Queen Mary was basely betrayed and cruelly oppressed during her life, and calumniated after her death. Many things contributed to involve her in difficulties and dangers on her return to Scotland: her invincible adherence to her religion—her implicit submission to the dictates of her French friends —her having roused the jealousy of Elizabeth by assuming the English arms —the ambition of her brother James, and the faithless plotting characters of others near her person—in a word, an invisible political net seemed to have been spread around her, from which it was hardly possible for her to

After the Queen's arrival in Glasgow, and probably in consequence of her tender attentions to his comfort, Darnley progressed so rapidly in his convalescence that he was able to commence his journey under her care, on Monday, January 27, and reached Callander that night, where they supped and slept. The next day they proceeded no farther than Linlithgow, and there they rested two nights. The accuracy of the dates of Mary's Privy Seal Register, which Laing and Robertson, in their persevering contest of words *versus* facts, vainly strive to impugn, is verified by that of the warrant, executed by Mary and Darnley, on the 28th of January 1566–7, at Linlithgow, constituting "their trusty servant Andrew Ferrier keeper of their royal palace there."[1] What reason is there that the grants, warrants, and precepts executed by Mary on the preceding Friday, January 24, should not be equally correct? There are no tenable grounds for doubting the one more than the other; nor would the objection have ever been started unless for the purpose of evading the legal evidence that Mary was in Edinburgh some part of that day, engaged in exercising a prerogative of her high vocation, instead of being occupied, as the conspirators pretend, in scribbling prolix letters full of sin and folly, and working bracelets for Bothwell at Glasgow. But why, it may be asked, were not the true dates used by Moray and the forger? For this plain

escape. Your efforts, sir, to relieve the memory of a much injured Princess from a load of calumny are generous and commendable, and I can assure you they have not been unsuccessful. There is a great and general change in the sentiments of the public on that subject. He would be a bold man who should publish a history of Queen Mary now in the same strain with our two late historians"—Malcolm Laing and Robertson, whose sophistries were rightly estimated by that clear-headed and honest historian, Dr Henry. Dr Johnson, a person of a very different way of thinking from either, pronounced a most decided opinion in favour of Mary's innocence, and expressed his firm conviction "that the silver-casket letters were spurious, and would never again be brought forward as historic evidences." What would Henry and Johnson have said of these being actually woven into M. Mignet's Memoir of Mary, as a part of the narrative, and avowals of the most atrocious and unnatural purposes of murder selected from them, and put into Mary's own mouth?—his references being but to the French translation of Buchanan's libels, "Memoires de l'Estat de France sous Charles IX., 1578," printed at Middelbourg.

[1] Privy Seal Registers, lib. xxxv. p. 114. Goodall, vol. i. p. 121.

reason, the truth would not serve their purpose, for Mary was too short a time in Glasgow to have penned even a small portion of the absurd libels on herself, contained in the three letters she is feigned to have written there, seeing she arrived not till the Saturday evening, January 25, rested that night and the Sunday; in the course of which day she and her consort would, according to their bounden duty as members of the Church of Rome, hear matins, mass, and vespers; and they both left Glasgow early on the Monday morning. It was therefore necessary to pretend that she arrived three days earlier than she really did, in order to infer the possibility of the royal traveller accomplishing all the hard work which they impose upon her, both with pen and needle, without any consideration for the pain in her side of which they make her complain during her brief sojourn in Glasgow. Now, as neither those letters nor Moray's Journal were produced as evidence, much less published, till nearly two years afterwards—and the dates in the former, though artfully indicated, were not absolutely given—it was not quite so easy to expose the discrepancy then as now, when the movements of the Sovereign are recorded by the daily press. Mary's whereabouts could only be tested by referring to the dates of her regal signatures; but these papers, even if they had thought of appealing to them, had passed into Moray's hands.

In the second of the forged letters, deceitfully dated at Glasgow this "Saturday morning,"[1] Mary is made to say, "That she should bring her husband to Craigmillar on the Monday, and remain with him there till the Wednesday, when she should herself go to Edinburgh to be bled."[2] Like everything else, this is contrary to the facts; for, instead of compelling her poor invalid to post from Glasgow to Craigmillar in one day, she conveyed him by such easy stages that it was not till Thursday, January 30, they reached Edinburgh, having been actually four days in performing the journey—Darnley was cautiously conveyed in her own litter, a long carriage, supported between two

[1] Saturday, January 25.

[2] Anderson's Collections.

horses, where he might recline at full length on a soft mattress or bed, warmly wrapped in furs, and feel neither the cold nor the roughness of the roads. Meantime, as he had objected to go to Craigmillar, and Holyrood Palace and Edinburgh Castle were unfit for him—the one too low and damp, the other too high and bleak—the Provost's house, near St Mary's Kirk of Field, in the southern suburb of Edinburgh, was recommended as a suitable place for his temporary abode, till he should have gone through the usual course of medical purifications deemed necessary to prevent him from communicating the infection to the Prince his son, and others. Such, indeed, was the terror inspired by the small-pox at that time in Scotland, where, in consequence of the proper treatment of that frightful malady not being understood, it was almost as fatal as the plague, that every one attacked with the infection was immediately carried out of any town where he might happen to be, and no one suspected of it was permitted to come within the walls[1]—a sanitary regulation of the civic magistrates, which the Queen would not have been justified in endangering the lives of her subjects by violating; nor would it have been safe for her to do so, as she had already been denounced from the pulpit by Knox as the cause of all the fevers and contagious maladies that had accidentally occurred in the districts through which she had travelled.[2] The nature of Darnley's malady was, therefore, clearly the cause of his being lodged in the suburb till he and his servants should have performed a sort of quarantine, by going through the medical discipline prescribed in such cases, and which was, in the expressive parlance of the times and country, termed their "*clenging*,"—*i. e.*, cleansing. Till that process had been complied with, all small-pox patients and convalescents, like the lepers of old, were treated as temporary pariahs, and excluded from social intercourse. The selection of the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field for Darn-

[1] Note to Robertson's History of Scotland. Vestiges of this custom may still be traced in various parts of England, the name of the Pest-House being occasionally attached to some isolated antique domicile in the open fields, on the verge of towns or villages, a relic generally of a monastic hospitium for the reception of persons afflicted with small-pox or leprosy.

[2] History of the Reformation in Scotland.

ley's sanatorium was made, not by the Queen, who had arranged, as already explained, everything proper for his comfort in the more extensive and commodious suite of apartments lately occupied by herself, when in the hands of her physician, at Craigmillar Castle, but by her Ministers, who were all secretly leagued with Morton and the returned outlaws for the murder. Lethington, Bothwell, Sir James Balfour parson of Fliske, his brother Robert Balfour, Provost, of Kirk-of-Field, the owner of the house, and Archibald Douglas, Morton's deputy, being the acting committee for its perpetration, availed themselves of the opportunity thus unexpectedly afforded by Darnley's unlucky objections to Craigmillar Castle, to choose this isolated mansion as the most proper place for the execution of their long-premeditated crime. Moray was, however, the person by whom it was recommended to the Queen "as a place highly situate, in good air, environed with pleasant gardens, and removed from the noise of the people; while the Palace, on the contrary, stood low, and, by reason of the Court being kept there, had always a great resort."[1] He reminded her, also, "that the Lord Borthwick, whose life had been despaired of, having lately occupied that lodging, had wholly recovered his health and strength, in consequence of residing a few weeks in its salubrious air."[2]

A most dismal description is, of course, given of the locality of the house of Kirk-of-Field by Buchanan, who, as the literary organ of the conspirators, exerts all his eloquence to persuade his English readers, to whom it was a complete *terra incognita*, that it was the most unwholesome, horrible, and dangerous place to which an invalid could be brought. The contrary has since been practically demonstrated by the learned medical faculty of Edinburgh uniting in choosing it for the site of the Royal Infirmary, and the fact of the ground being at present occupied by the College. The Thief's Row, on which he has had much to say, was neither more nor less, though it undoubtedly bore that disreputable name, than the lodgings occupied by persons availing them-

[1] Blackwood's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.
[2] Freebairn's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.

selves of the privilege of the sanctuary of our Lady's Kirk of Field, which remained, like that attached to the Abbey of Holyrood, long after the dissolution of the monastic foundation to which it originally pertained.[1] Whatever might be said of the badness of such a neighbourhood, applied no less to the Edinburgh palace of the first prince of the blood-royal, Hamilton Duke of Châtelherault, which was in juxtaposition to the Provost's house of Kirk-of-Field, and where his brother the Primate of Scotland was then residing, within sight and hearing of everything going on in the lodgings chosen by Moray and his confederates for Darnley. The mansion itself was a substantially built edifice, only two storeys high, with a basement or cellar which served for kitchen and offices. A spiral staircase in a turret, defended by what was then called, and is still called in Scotland, a turnpike, on the same plan as a wicket turnstile, communicated with the private entrance through a low postern-door in the town-wall, and gave access to both chambers through their respective lobbies. Behind these were the small apartments, called *garderobes*, in which the attendants slept; and considering the fact that no less than five perished with Darnley, and that one absented himself that night, and another was taken out alive, they must have been strangely crowded. Scotch dormitories were, however, arranged for persons of inferior rank very much in the manner of berths in a steam-packet, in recesses in the walls, masked with sliding pannels, of which many examples may still be seen in ancient castles, as well as the Highland hostels and cottages.

Among the other preparations for the reception of the victim, made by the secret junta of the conspirators—including Sir James Balfour,[2] his brother Robert Balfour the

[1] See the plate in Chalmers' Life of Queen Mary, from the original drawing in the State Paper Office.

[2] Sir James Balfour, generally styled by Knox, in sarcastic allusion to his retention of his rich benefice when he joined the Congregation and became a lay statesman, "the Parson of Fliske," was one of the assassins of Cardinal Beton. He and his two brothers, Gilbert and Robert, were taken at the storming of the castle of St Andrews, and were condemned to the galleys, in which they suffered incredible hardships, till released with their distinguished companion, John Knox, and the rest of the Scottish

owner of the house, the Secretary Lethington, Archibald Douglas, agent for Morton, and his two servants, John Binning and James Gairner — mines were dug "in the vaults and other low and *derne* (darkened) places of the house, and a quantity of gunpowder lodged therein, and also in the angular stands or corners of the foundation-walls of the building."[1] This was certainly done without the privity of Bothwell, who was not drawn into the gunpowder plot till nearly a week later, Friday the 7th of February, when, as will be shown in due time, he was induced to consent to that device, and to send for a quantity of powder from his military arsenal at Dunbar. Some of the powder deposited in the mines in the foundations of the building was contributed by Sir James Balfour, to the value of threescore pounds Scots, which he covenanted to pay for, not in money, but oil.[2] But Archibald Douglas also furnished his share; for John Binning, his servant, fourteen years afterwards, confessed on his trial "to bearing a barrel of gunpowder for his master to the Provost's house by the Kirk-of-Field."[3]

Their Majesties left Linlithgow for Edinburgh 30th January, and were met on the road by the Earl of Bothwell, whose duty it was, as Sheriff of the Lothians, to receive and escort them to Edinburgh: such being the simple explanation of the sinister entry in Moray's Journal about "Bothwell keeping tryst with the Queen, and meeting her by the way the day she came out of Linlithgow, and brought the King to Edinburgh."[4] It would have been esteemed a serious misdemeanour on the part of any sheriff, either in Scotland or England, who should have failed to pay that public mark of respect to royalty.

All the nobles and gentry mounted, as a matter of course, to meet and welcome their liege lady on her return to her

captives, through the powerful intercession of the Queen-mother, Mary of Lorraine. Knox notices "that Fliske liked not for it to be known that he was ever among the company at St Andrews Castle." It was an association of which even he was ashamed.

[1] Arnott's Criminal Trials. Moyse.

[2] Drury to Cecil, February 28, 1566-7—Border Correspondence. State Paper Office MS.

[3] Arnott's Criminal Trials.

[4] Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 172.

metropolis, for she came in state from Linlithgow to Edinburgh, which the inimical author of the Oration, generally attributed to George Buchanan, terms "the Queen gloriously showing herself in pompous manner."[1] Her perfidious Ministers not having, for obvious reasons, clearly defined which of the two houses by the Kirk-of-Field had been prepared for Darnley's lodging, the Queen, when they alighted at the portal of the Provost's house, supposing it was a mistake, took her consort by the hand to lead him to the Hamilton Palace, hard by, but was prevented by the Earl of Moray, who, being there to receive his victims, interposed, and conducted them into the fatal mansion appointed by him and his confederates for the consummation of their long-premeditated crime.[2] The direct reverse of this incident was, nevertheless, asserted by Thomas Nelson, a witness of some importance, being the only one of Darnley's servants who survived the tragedy; and being subsequently brought forward by Moray before the English Council, in a bold attempt to criminate the Queen, deposed "that it was devised in Glasgow that the King should first have lain in Craigmillar, but because he had no will thereto, the purpose was altered, and conclusion taken that he should lie beside the Kirk-of-Field; at which time the deponent believed ever that he should have had the Duke's house, and knew of no other house till the King alighted, at which time he passed directly to the Duke's house, thinking it to be the lodging prepared for him; but the contrary was shown him by the Queen, who conveyed him to the other house; and at his coming there, the chamber was hung, and a new bed of black figured velvet standing therein."[3] Nelson added, "that the Queen caused take down the new black bed, saying 'it would be soiled with the bath;' and thereafter set up an old purple bed, that was used to be carried." Nelson's evidence has been considered to weigh heavily against Mary, by writers who know so little of the habits and feelings of royalty as

[1] Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 65.
[2] Hist. Mary Queen of Scots, by Adam Blackwood, pp. 29, 30.
[3] Deposition of Thomas Nelson before the English Commissioners at York, November 9, 1569, endorsed by Cecil—State Paper Office MS.

to imagine that a Queen, a reigning Sovereign, burdened with affairs of state, could bestow the like thrifty care on articles of furniture as the wife of a burgess. The variety, number, and magnificence of Mary's beds, with their hangings of cloth-of-gold and silver brocade, and velvet of costly dyes, embroidered and fringed with bullion and silk, have already been noticed, and abundant instances given of her lavish generosity to all around her. Moray's shallow attempt to make her out a sordid wretch, imbecilely exerting housewifely economy, by changing a new black velvet bed for an old purple bed, in order to infer her foreknowledge of her husband's murder, fortunately leads to the invalidation of Nelson's testimony altogether, by enabling us to convict him of deliberate false witness in his statement regarding it. A bed of black figured velvet, corresponding with Nelson's description of that which he swore was standing in the King's chamber on his arrival in his lodgings at Kirk-of-Field, actually appears in Mary's wardrobe inventory,[1] with this difference only, that it was not new, for she had had it nearly five years, neither was it new when it came into her possession. Truth compels the reluctant acknowledgment that her Majesty did not come honestly by it, it having been seized in her name, with the rest of the goodly graith and rich plenishing of the unfortunate Earl of Huntley, when her victorious lieutenant, the Earl of Moray, plundered the castle of Strathbogie, at the time of the Gordon tragedy.[2] Sufficient reason for Mary ordering the gloomy hearse-like object out of her sick husband's chamber, had that mute witness of wrong and rob-

[1] Royal Wardrobe Inventories, privately printed by the late Thomas Thomson, Esq. The clerk who made the inventory of all the costly furniture, plate, tapestry, and other valuables left by Queen Mary in her palace of Holyrood House, at the time when the successful machinations of the conspirators transferred her personal property, as well as her sceptre, to her brother Moray, has, with technical minuteness, accounted for the absence of every article in the original list delivered to Servais de Condé by a predecessor in his office of Master of the Wardrobe, from the year 1561 up to April 1567, when the reign of Mary Stuart virtually closed by her becoming a prisoner to Bothwell.

[2] This bed is marked No. 3 in the "Inventour of the movables of *umquhile* the Earl of Huntley, *quhilkis* was delivered to me [*Servais de Condé*] by James Stuart, gentleman to the Earl of Moray, received in December 1562." —Royal Wardrobe Inventories, printed by Thomas Thomson, Esq.

bery startled her with its ominous aspect on her entrance; but it never was there. In proof thereof appears the marginal notation against that article, No. 3 in THE WARDROBE INVENTOUR, "Delivered when the Queen was at Hamilton."[1] Now, this was in August 1565, a year and a half before the time Nelson deposed to seeing it in Darnley's chamber in the lodging by the Kirk-of-Field; for Mary was never in Hamilton again till after her escape from Lochleven. Moray was then in arms against her, had taken possession of her palace, her jewels, plate, dresses, and costly furniture, and would have hanged any officer of her wardrobe who should have ventured to deliver the smallest iota of her property without his order.

The evidence of the same inventory entirely upsets, and for ever, the story of the substitution of the old purple bed by the Queen, by certifying the fact, that a costly velvet bed of rich tint, described as violet-brown, with drapings, passamented with silver and gold, was appropriated for Darnley's use in the fatal lodging of Kirk-of-Field, and perished with him. Witness the following entry: "No. 7. Item, ane bed of violet-brown velvet, passamented with a passament of gold and silver, furnished with roof, head-piece, and pandis, three under-pandis, &c. &c." Against this description the marginal notation appears—"In August 1566 the Queen gave this bed to the King, furnished with all things, and in Februar 1567 the said bed was *tint* [lost] in his lodgings."[2]

Little did the devisers of the perjured depositions of Nelson imagine the possibility of their plausible fictions being detected through the mechanical minuteness of the clerk by whom these explanatory notes were added for the information of Moray himself—notes which, in the fulness of time, were to bring their simple matter-of-fact evidence to bear on the question of Mary's innocence, by confuting the falsehoods with which her accusers endeavoured to bolster up their calumnious charges against her.

The particulars derived from "Queen Mary's Wardrobe Book" are corroborated in a remarkable manner by a

[1] Royal Wardrobe Inventories. [2] Ibid., p. 124.

recently discovered paper, of no less importance than the original discharge, executed and signed by herself, exonerating Servais de Condé for the loss of the rich movables which he had delivered, by her order, to furnish the King's lodgings, and which were destroyed there.[1] From the items in this list, an idea may be formed of the regal as well as comfortable style in which the apartments of the princely invalid were fitted up for his temporary abode.

"Firstly, a bed of violet velvet, with double vallances, passamented with gold and silver, furnished with a silk palliasse, mattress and *traversin* [bolster], and one coverlid of blue taffaty *piccquée*, and two other coverings, an *orrilier* and *envelope* [pillow and pillow-case]. One little table with a cloth of green velvet; a high chair, covered with violet velvet, with a cushion; xvi pieces of tapestry, enough for his chamber, his hall, and wardrobe, both great and little; a *dais* for his hall, of black velvet, with double draperies."

The last article denotes that Darnley had a presence-chamber as well as a bedroom at the house of Kirk-of-Field, and that it was fitted up by the Queen's orders, as regal etiquette required, with the raised platform called a *dais*, a canopy, or cloth-of-state. He had also a double-seated chair of state called a *canapé*, covered with yellow and red rayed taffety,[2] which would be occupied by himself and his royal consort; a high chair covered with leather, for his bedroom, and several useful articles not necessary to enumerate here. "A small turn-up bed, with tawny and green damask furniture, a silk palliasse, mattress and bolster, a stitched coverlid of green taffaty, with two other coverings and an

[1] "Discharge of the furniture I had carried to the lodgings of the late King, which furniture was destroyed without anything being recovered. (Signed) MARIE R."—Inedited MSS. among the Royal Records in Her Majesty's General Register House, Edinburgh. It is a fact of no ordinary interest, that the above document was discovered, and most kindly communicated, by that able and liberal-minded antiquary, Joseph Robertson, Esq., in Her Majesty's Register House, Edinburgh, while this chapter was actually passing through the press. Some delay has, in consequence, been incurred by breaking up the revised types, in order to introduce it at so important a portion of Mary's biography. The original is in French.

[2] Thomson's Wardrobe Book of Queen Mary.

envelope; and a taffaty pavilion, turning into the form of a wardrobe." [1] This bed was for the gentleman-in-waiting who slept in Darnley's chamber.

Besides these, we observe in the Wardrobe Book that three red velvet cushions, and three of green velvet, and a red taffety coverlid, stitched, the gift of the Queen, and probably her work, were "*tint* in the King's lodgings." The minute accurateness of Mary's wardrobe officials is further attested by the following explanatory notes to accounting for the absence of certain missing articles of apparently small value:—

"There was lost, at the baptism of my lord the Prince, a piece of tapestry of Liscot of the history of the rabbit-hunter. Also lost at Stirling, at the baptism of my Lord Prince, a piece of tapestry of large leaves, and a small Turkey carpet, and a pair of linen sheets, in the lodgings of the late King. More, lost at Falkland two large sheets, belonging to the beds that are at Falkland."

The testimony of the most inimical of witnesses proves that the Queen did everything in her power to soothe and cheer her husband during the period of his quarantine, passing much of her time with him. When she required air and exercise, she walked with Lady Reres[2] in the garden of the ruined Dominican convent which adjoined that of the Kirk-of-Field, and occasionally sang duets with her, probably under the window of the princely invalid, to gratify his musical taste. Sometimes she sent for the royal band from Holyrood House, to play in these gardens of an evening.[3]

The reconciliation between the royal pair was apparently perfect. Darnley had been chastened by that stern schoolmaster sickness, and brought to self-recollection and repentance by the near prospect of the grave. He was not past the age for improvement, and he made daily promises of becoming all his royal wife could desire. Her company was so sweet to him that he was always loth to part with her when she bade him adieu for the night, and returned

[1] Queen's Discharge to Servais de Condé, Register Office MS., inedited.

[2] Buchanan.

[3] Bell's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.

to Holyrood House to sleep. As he sometimes wooed her to prolong her stay beyond the hour when the gates were closed, and his health was still far from re-established, Mary caused the lower chamber to be fitted up as a bedroom for herself, that she might occasionally oblige him by passing the night under the same roof with him. The first night she slept at the house of Kirk-of-Field, she caused a door to be removed which had previously cut off the communication between the upper chamber and the lower, and thus opened free access to her consort, in case he had chosen to visit her, either by day or night.[1] This arrangement, although according to the strict etiquette of royalty, whose household regulations, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, were immutable, has been cited as one of the evidences of her complicity in Darnley's murder; whereas, if she had not complied with the custom which prescribed that there should be unimpeded communication between her husband's chamber and her own, the most calumnious construction would have been placed by her maligners on his approach being cut off while she was sleeping on the ground-floor. Thus her most prudent as well as her most innocent actions were turned to her reproach, by those whose interest it was to defame her; and her virtues distorted into crimes, lest they should be pleaded as inconsistent with the guilt imputed to her. Her generous acceptance of her oft-offending husband's penitence, and her endearing conduct to him during his sickness, have been treated as instances of her dissimulation, although she had nothing to gain by dissimulating with the poor defenceless invalid, whom she might have destroyed, if such had been her purpose, during the two days of their sojourn in her country palace at Linlithgow, much more quietly than bringing him under the walls of Edinburgh, to attract public attention to the uproarious manner of his cutting off. But such purposes were foreign to her nature; for, in the wide range of female royalty, there is not a princess whose conduct has afforded more touch-

[1] Nelson's Deposition—Anderson's Collections.

ing exemplifications of the tender characteristics of her sex, so beautifully described by Sir Walter Scott, than Mary Stuart:—

> "Oh, woman, in our hours of ease,
> Uncertain, coy, and hard to please,
> And variable as the shade
> By the light quivering aspen made;
> When pain and anguish wring the brow,
> A ministering angel thou!"

Such had she been to her first consort, the sickly, stammering, unattractive Francis, proving herself, during his suffering life and painful death, the most tender and devoted of all his attendants. Such had she also been to the favoured object of her choice, her princely kinsman Darnley, when the sore sickness that visited him, by exciting her feminine sympathy and solicitude, first betrayed the state of her affections to her Court. He had repaid her love with injuries; been false, ungrateful, and unkind; but she, still true to the sweet and holy instincts of her nature and her sex, had ever been more ready to pardon than he to sin against her—had been only too happy to play the sweet office of a conjugal nurse once more, when she found him languishing for her presence, and willing to resign himself to her care and gentle guidance. What more could erring husband or forgiving wife desire, than the renewal of love and mutual confidence? But this was what was dreaded, not desired, by the cruel traitors, who had so often sown the seeds of mutual jealousy and distrust between the royal pair.

Three days before the consummation of the tragedy, Mary's illegitimate brother, the Lord Robert, Commendator of Orkney, who was in the confederacy, took an opportunity of telling Darnley, privately, "that there was a plot against his life, and unless he found some means of escaping from the house in which he then was, he would never be permitted to leave it alive."[1] Darnley immediately informed the Queen, and she, who had had but

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs. Buchanan.

too much reason to consider the Lord Robert a dangerous mischief-maker, supposing he was at his old tricks again, sent for him, and commanded him to explain his meaning. Instead of doing this, he denied point-blank having used the expressions reported by the King. Darnley, enraged at his falsehood and effrontery, angrily told him he lied, which the other insolently retorting, a fierce altercation ensued, and both laid hands on their daggers. Bloodshed might have ensued, if the Queen had not called, in terror, on Moray to part them, and take his brother away. Buchanan represents her straightforward and natural conduct on this occasion as dictated by a desire to cause the death of either her husband or her brother;[1] but clearly she did her duty, with the courage of a just person, by inquiring of Lord Robert, in Darnley's presence, on what grounds he had made so serious an intimation to her husband, the times being full of suspicion, and his life having been previously conspired against by the English faction. Moray must have been present also, for he could not have arrived in time, had she sent for him, to part men at sudden strife, who were menacing each other with daggers; and if in the house, it must have been in Darnley's chamber, as there was no waiting-room. Moray's presence reduced Lord Robert to the necessity of first eating his own words, and then endeavouring to face the matter out before the Queen, by flinging the imputation of falsehood on her husband, who had forfeited all claim to veracity by his conduct in regard to Riccio's murder. This altercation, we are told both by Melville and Buchanan, was the cause why Bothwell hasted forward his enterprise. The suspicions of Darnley and the Queen having been awakened by the conduct of the Lord Robert, further investigation, even judicial inquiry, might well be dreaded by Lethington, by Moray, the Balfours, and others of the conspirators; and this, if time were allowed for it, must have led to the detection of the plot. It became, therefore, necessary to precipitate the enterprise, to prevent further disclosures from being made by some of the numerous

[1] History of Scotland. Detection.

parties to whom the design had been confided. John Hepburn of Bowton, one of his vassal lairds, deposed that Bothwell opened the atrocious project for the assassination of the unfortunate Darnley in these words: "There is a purpose devised among some of the noblemen that the King shall be slain, and every one of us shall send two servants to the doing of it, either in the fields or otherwise, as he may be apprehended."[1] After this preface, he coolly asked Hepburn if he would be one of the enterprisers? Hepburn answered, "That it was an evil purpose; yet, because he was his servant and cousin, he would do as others did, and put his hand to it." The next morning, Bothwell proposed the matter in his presence to the Laird of Ormiston, and John Hay, the younger of Tallo, telling them "that other noblemen had as far interest in the matter as he," but no word of the Queen's consent thereto, which would have been, of course, a far more cogent inducement. Ormiston and Hay made the like answer as Hepburn had done, and they continued to hold conferences with him on this subject till Friday, February 7, two days before the murder, when Bothwell told them he had "changed his purpose of the slaying the King in the fields, because then it would be known," and explained to them "what way it might be practised better by powder."[2]

Now, there can be little doubt that this portion of the evidence is true, for it explains in a few simple words what Bothwell's original plan was, and the manner in which he induced his unprincipled kinsmen and vassal lairds to render their assistance. It is a picture of the state of feudal morals on the Border at that time. Here are three men, of the rank of gentlemen, landed proprietors, who have no animosity against their Sovereign's consort, and consider his murder would be an evil deed; and yet, because their chief asks them to lend him and his noble accomplices their assistance to perpetrate it, they agree at once "to put hand to it," and that without either bribe or promise of gaining any advantage for themselves. And we find that two days,

[1] Deposition of John Hepburn of Bowton, or Bolton, in Anderson's Collections.

[2] Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. p. 184.

and two only, before the murder was perpetrated, Bothwell was induced to change his first intention of setting upon the King with his bravoes and coadjutors, when Darnley should be engaged in field-sports, consented to have recourse to the clumsy device of blowing the intended victim up with gunpowder, and was actually guilty of the suicidal folly of rushing headlong with his servants and vassal kinsmen into the trap prepared for him, by causing the powder to be brought from his military magazine at Dunbar, first to his apartments in Holyrood House, then carried by his well-known horses and servants, and deposited in the King's lodging in Kirk-of-Field, and, finally, sent the empty trunks back again to his own apartments, thus preparing a train of circumstances as if for the very purpose of leading to his own detection. It was for this purpose that his unreflecting brain was inflamed by the cooler villains, who were "fooling him to the top of his bent" with promises of rewarding him, for becoming the minister of their murderous hatred to Darnley, with the possession of the Queen in marriage, and all the advantages to be derived from such illustrious wedlock.

A vacancy unfortunately occurring in the Queen's household at this juncture, Bothwell seized the opportunity to recommend a foreign domestic of his own, named Nicholas Hubert, more commonly known by the sobriquet of French Paris, to fill the office of valet, or chamber-chield, to her Majesty, Hubert having served him faithfully during his exile, and ever since his return to Scotland in 1565. The Queen, unfortunately too apt to bestow her patronage on foreigners, took this person into her service. The first day he entered on his term of waiting at the house of Kirk-of-Field, Bothwell came to him in the Queen's chamber while she was engaged with her consort up-stairs, and said to him, "Paris, forasmuch as I have ever found thee a true and faithful servant, I will tell thee something; but keep it under the pain of thy life." "My lord," returned he, "it pertaineth not to a servant to reveal his master's secrets; but if it be anything ye think I cannot keep close, tell it not to me." "Wottest thou what the matter is?" said

Bothwell, "if that this King, here above, get on his feet over us lords of this realm, he would be both masterful and cruel; but as for us, we will not allow such things, and also it is not the fashion of this country; and therefore, among us, we have concluded to blow him up with powder within this house." At this intimation, Hubert affirms "his heart and senses seemed overpowered, and he looked on the ground in mute dismay."[1] Bothwell demanded what he was thinking about. "What think I, my lord?" returned Hubert; "it mot please you to appardon me if I shall tell according to my poor understanding what I think." "Wouldst thou preach?" exclaimed Bothwell—but added angrily, "say on, say on." "My lord," replied Hubert, "since these five or six years I have been in your service, I have seen you in great troubles, and never saw any friends that did for you. And now, my lord, you are forth of all your troubles, thanked be God, and further in Court, as all the world knows, than ever ye was. Moreover, it is said that ye are the greatest landlord of this country, and also ye are married, at which time a man should become sober and sedate; but now, my lord, if ye enter into this business, it will prove the greatest trouble you have ever had—far beyond the others—for every one will cry, 'Ha, Herault!' after you."[2] "Hast thou done?" interrupted Bothwell. "My lord, I pray you, pardon what I have spoken according to my poor understanding," said Hubert. "Thinkest thou then that I do this alone, or of myself?" asked Bothwell. "My lord, I cannot tell how you do it,"

[1] French Paris's First Confession—Laing's Appendix, vol. i.

[2] This quaint expression, which the translator of the excerpt from Hubert, *alias* French Paris's First Confession in Goodall not comprehending, has simply rendered "Ha, ha!" is neither more nor less than the old Norman hue and cry of "Ha, Rou!" an appeal to the laws of Rollo for vengeance against murderers. We shall presently find Hubert repeating it; and as it is one of those local *mots* derived from traditionary customs unknown in Scotland, its use affords strong evidence of the authenticity of the document in which it occurs, and would lead to the conclusion that Hubert, though familiarly called French Paris, was a native of Normandy. He was clearly a Protestant, or he would not have been in Bothwell's service; and he speaks of going to church to pray for heavenly direction, not to the Chapel-Royal.

replied Hubert; "but this I know well, it will be the greatest trouble you have had yet." "How can that be?" said Bothwell, "for I have Lethington,[1] who is accounted one of the subtlest spirits in this realm, and he is the manager of it all; and besides him, I have the Earl of Argyll, my brother the Earl of Huntley, the Earl of Morton, and the Lords Ruthven and Lindsay. These three will never fail me, for I have interceded for their pardon; and I have the signatures of all I have named to thee, and also they were minded to do it when we were last at Craigmillar; but thou art a beast of such a mean spirit, thou art not worthy to be trusted with a matter of such consequence." "Forsooth, my lord, you say truly, for my spirit serveth me not for such things," replied Hubert, "but rather to do you what service I may: and well, my lord, may they make you the leader and principal in this deed; but as soon as it shall be done, they will throw the whole on you, and be the first to cry 'Ha, Herault!' after you, and to proceed against you to the death, if in their power."

The event proved that Hubert, if he possessed not the faculty of second-sight, was indued with no ordinary degree of foresight. He next took the liberty of inquiring what part the Earl of Moray would take in the enterprise, though probably not quite in the flattering terms used by him in repeating this conversation in Moray's presence. "There is one, my lord, you have not named. I know well that he is beloved by the common people and by us Frenchmen; that when he governed the space of two or three years there were no troubles in the country—everything went well—money had the course, but now no man has any, and we see nothing but trouble. He is wise, and has good friends." "Whom mean you?" inquired Bothwell. "It is my Lord of Moray. I pray you tell me what part taketh he?" rejoined Hubert. "He will not meddle with the matter," said Bothwell. "'My lord, he is prudent," responded

[1] The reader must remember that this confession of Paris was not published by Moray till the end of August 1569, when a split had taken place between him and several of the parties named, and he was about to denounce Lethington as a party to Darnley's murder.

Hubert. Bothwell on this, turning himself about, exclaimed, "My Lord of Moray!—my Lord of Moray!. He will neither help us nor hinder us; but it's all one."[1]

After this evidence of Moray's foreknowledge and tacit consent, it would be mere Quixotism to maintain that he was a whit more innocent of the crime than the brainless ruffians who performed the butcher-work. How deep he really was in the business may be inferred from the fact that the deposition, containing the above uncontradicted assertion of his foreknowledge and quiescence in the guilty design of the assassins, was put forth by his own authority, and transmitted by himself to Queen Elizabeth. It coincides in a remarkable manner with Lethington's sarcastic observation, when endeavouring to tempt Queen Mary to consent to a divorce from Darnley, "that my Lord of Moray would behold the matter through his fingers, and say nothing thereto."[2] Consistently with the profound dissimulation of his character, as in the previous enterprise for the slaughter of David Riccio and the arrest of the Queen, Moray allowed others to incur the responsibility of the deed in his absence, then came forward to reap the fruits of their rash daring.

Bothwell concluded his conference with Hubert by desiring him to take the key of the Queen's chamber. "My lord, you will pardon me, if you please," replied Hubert, "inasmuch as I am a stranger, and it is not my office, for the usher would with reason inquire what I had to do with it." "Why," demanded Bothwell, "are not you valet-de-chambre to the Queen?"[3] "True, my lord," replied Hubert, "but you know in the house of a Prince every officer has his particular duty; and among others, the usher has that of keeping the key of this chamber, the care of which pertains to him." "Why then," cried Bothwell, angrily, "have I placed you in the Queen's chamber, unless to draw service from you?" "Alas, my lord!" observed the wretched man, "such service as is in my poor power to do

[1] French Paris's Confession.

[2] Letter of Huntley and Argyll—Goodall.

[3] It is perhaps necessary to repeat that this office involved no personal service, as some have ignorantly inferred, but was like that of a lady's footman in modern times, he waited upon her in her sitting-room.

you may command;" mentally adding, "An I had known what service you required, this chamber should never have chambered me."[1] Terrified at Bothwell's behaviour and the remembrance of the cruel kicks and cuffs he used to bestow on him for every slight opposition to his will when he was in his service, as soon as his tyrant departed Hubert put on his cloak and sword, and walked to the great church, St Giles's Cathedral, where he returned thanks to God that he had escaped out of his hands, though but for a short season; and at the same time prayed fervently that some way might be made to deliver him from the evil of being forced to become an accomplice in his crime.

On Friday, February 7, when Bothwell had made up his mind fully to adopt the plan of blowing up the King's chamber with gunpowder, he came again to Hubert, and inquired "if he had got the key of the Queen's chamber?" Hubert replied, "I will see about it, my lord." "Fail me not," was Bothwell's rejoinder, "for we are going to put the deed in execution on Sunday night."[2]

The reason for Bothwell and his accomplices appointing that particular night for their atrocious purpose was because they knew the Queen and all her attendants would be away, she having promised to give a masked ball at Holyrood Abbey, in honour of the nuptials of her faithful servants Sebastian Paiges and Margaret Carwood. Mary owed a deep debt of gratitude to this pair for the assistance they had rendered her and Darnley, in providing the means for them to effect their escape from the restraint in which both were held by the associate traitors in Holyrood Abbey, after the assassination of Riccio.[3] In grateful remembrance of this important service, Queen Mary, the day before the marriage, endowed Margaret Carwood with a liferent pension of 300 merks,[4] and bestowed on them both, from her wardrobe stores, the materials for their wedding garments. The colours were, of course, left to their own choice; and, by a singular coincidence, both bride and bridegroom

[1] From the Original French Col., b. ix. f. 370, Cotton Lib., Brit. Mus.
[2] Ibid. [3] See vol. iv. Lives of the Queens of Scotland, p. 116.
[4] Privy Seal Record, b. xxxvi. fol. 7.

selected the ominous hue of black, which, however, did not always imply mourning.

The technical minuteness of the clerk of the wardrobe's record of all the necessary items for Margaret's bridal dress, derives a curious interest from their connection with the historic tragedy which converted that bridal into an anniversary of woe and horror.

"Item, the viijth day of Februar, by the Quenis Grace precept to Bastiane Pagis, *virlate*,[1] for his marriage, xiij elnis iij quarteris of blak satine, to be ane gowne, with wide slevis, to his wiffe, the elne iij Li. sũ. xli Li. vs. Item, three quarteris of blak velvate, to bordour the gowne, and to be skirt and *huid* [hood], the eln vj Li. šma. Lij Li. x š. Margaret *Cawood*, to hir marriage, 15 ells of black velvet, and four great hanks of gold."[2]

In addition to these substantial marks of her favour, the Queen graciously promised to dance at the bridal of Margaret and Bastian, and to do them the further honour of putting the bride to bed—a complimentary ceremony, in full accordance with the manners of the period, and not confined to the customs of the sixteenth century. Mary Beatrice, the consort of James II., assisted at the bridal *couché* of Adelaide of Savoy, the Duchess of Maine, and other ladies, both of the court of France and in her own household. Margaret and Bastian remained faithfully attached to the fortunes of their royal mistress in her adversity; they shared her exile and her comfortless English prisons for nearly nineteen years, with a fidelity that could neither be purchased by wages nor requited by gifts: who shall say she condescended too much in the trifling marks of esteem with which, in the brief sunshine of her greatness, she gratified hearts so leal and true? She had proved their worth in the perilous crisis of the first formidable conspiracy that threatened her life and throne, and she honoured them, not according to their rank, but their deeds. It was not in her nature to forget a benefit from persons of low degree; she

"Of friends, however humble, scorned not one."

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[1] Virlat—a valet, an inferior servant; a groom.

[2] Exchequer Record, 1566-7, General Register House, Edinburgh.

The calumniators of Mary Stuart have not spared the reputation of poor Margaret Carwood; but their assertions are unsupported by evidence of any kind. Her courageous and incorruptible fidelity to her royal mistress was her sole offence, and this entitled her to receive a full share of the outpourings of their inventive malice. Bastian was also denounced as an accomplice in the conspiracy against Darnley's life, on the absurd ground that it was to attend his wedding fête the Queen left her consort. It is worthy, however, of observation that Hay of Tallo, one of the parties concerned in firing the train, and who was hanged for his share in the murder, affirmed in his deposition "that this purpose should have been put in execution on the Saturday night, February 8; but the matter failed that night, because all things were not in readiness for it."[1] The cause of this delay may reasonably be attributed to the Queen's determination to sleep that night in the lower chamber; for, as she was destined to become Bothwell's prey, he took especial care not to blow up the house with her in it.

One of the most unscrupulous and extravagant of Mary's libellers affirms, "that Alexander Durham, who had slept in Darnley's chamber ever since their location in the house of Kirk-of-Field, as a pretext to escape doing so on the Saturday night, set fire to his palliasse, as if by accident, and flung it all in a blaze out of the room." If this incident really occurred, it is a strong corroboration of Hay's deposition regarding the original appointment of Saturday night for the deed-doing by the conspirators. Our authority adds, "that Darnley, who was very fond of Durham, pressed him to share his own bed, which he declined; and the next night also, feigning sickness, went away to sleep in the town, saying he must take physic, and thus escaped[2] the fate of Taylor and the other victims."[3]

[1] Anderson's Col., vol. iv. p. 75-6. [2] The author of the Oration. Ibid.

[3] As there was no evidence to convict Durham of complicity, his escape might have been regarded as a providential occurrence by persons not in the secret. The Queen, who behaved with her wonted kindness and generosity to Darnley's servants, offered places and preferments to all

On the Saturday, after dinner, Bothwell came again to the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field, and peremptorily demanded the key of the Queen's bed-chamber of the trembling Hubert, who, terrified as he was at the fear of incurring personal violence from his ruffian patron, had no power of complying with his requisition, and again humbly repeated, "that it was not his office to take charge of that key." And here the inference is plain that, if the Queen had been on those terms of familiarity with Bothwell her calumniators pretend, Bothwell would not have been reduced to the necessity of either bullying or importuning her gentleman-in-waiting for the key of her bed-chamber, as from Hubert's statement he did on three several days in vain. Neither could Archibald Beton, her usher, have been in the plot, as some of the tortured servants of Bothwell were compelled to depose, or the key would have been surrendered to Bothwell at the first word. It was because no such guilty intelligence existed between the Queen and him, and the usher faithfully performed his duty to his royal mistress in keeping the key from Bothwell, that the latter tried to get it in an underhand manner through Hubert, and, in reply to his protestations of the impossibility of complying with his reiterated demands, made the following boastful speech: "I have keys enough without thee, for there is not a door in this house of which I have not the key; for Sir James Balfour and I have been up all the night to examine and search the best means and place for the execution of our design, and have found good entry

who chose to remain with her. Durham, having been one of the officers of the wardrobe in her infancy, desiring to continue in the royal household, received from her the appointment of Master of the Wardrobe to the Prince her son, with a salary of £100 per annum Scots, about five-and-twenty pounds a-year—too small a sum to bear out the inference Malcolm Laing attaches to it; for if the Queen had been a party to the murder, she would have been compelled to pay very largely to purchase the silence of subordinate agents. Laing, with his usual want of candour, quotes the Queen's trifling mark of consideration for a favourite attendant of her husband's as a suspicious circumstance, and carefully conceals the fact that the good Regent Moray promoted Durham, in the following April, to the more lucrative and important office of Master of the Household to himself, in which he was continued by his worthy uncle, the Earl of Mar.—Treasurer's Accounts, April 1568, and July 1572.

thereto; but thou art a beast, whom I will not employ in it, for I have people enough without thee, faint-hearted as thou art."[1] That the duplicate keys of the house, thirteen in number, were obtained from the Balfours, is confirmed by the confession of the Laird of Ormiston "that they had them of him that owned the house."[2]

After Bothwell's departure, Hubert went into the Queen's chamber, where Margaret (the bride-elect) and some others were waiting for her Majesty, who was in the apartment above, bearing her sick consort company. Presently the word was given out to those below, "the Queen is going to the Abbey!" every one then vacated her Majesty's chamber to follow her, and Hubert, being the last, took the opportunity of locking the door and pocketing the key. At the Abbey he again encountered Bothwell, who asked him if he had got that key? "Yes, my lord," replied Hubert. "Then I command you to keep it," said Bothwell. In the course of an hour Margaret came to Hubert, and entreated him "to return to the lodgings at Kirk-of-Field, and search for a coverlid of marten fur in the Queen's chamber there, and ask young Sandy Durham, the King's door-keeper, to find some one to bring it up to the Abbey." Durham asked Hubert to let him have the key of the Queen's chamber.[3] "Pardon me," replied Hubert, "it is not for me to give it to any one but the usher." "Well, then," said Durham, "he will not let me have it." Another proof this of the fidelity of Archibald Beton, especially if Durham were, as asserted, leagued with the conspirators. Hubert, as he could get no assistance from Durham, carried the coverlid up to the Abbey himself, and delivered it to Margaret, who was waiting in the Queen's bed-chamber there to receive it from him. It was probably one of the royal presents for her wedding, and intended to dress her bridal bed on the following night, as her *couché* was to be honoured by the presence of the Queen and all the ladies of the Court, to assist in the national observances of breaking the benediction-cake over her head, pre-

[1] Hubert or French Paris's First Confession—Laing's Appendix.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

senting the silver posset-cup, and throwing the stocking.[1] Margaret required a costly coverlid, among other pretty things, to set off her chamber for the reception of all the good company who would be sure to throng it on that occasion.

[1] Sir Walter Scott alludes to the customs of the period, and of the condescension of royalty at brjdals, in the facetious couplet with which he concludes his noble poem of *Marmion*,—

"And bluff King Hal the curtain drew,
And Catharine's hand the stocking threw."

As lately as the marriage of the son of George II., Frederick Prince of Wales, and the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, these coarse customs of the olden times were practised by royalty: and they were not abolished till the marriage of George III. and Queen Charlotte; for in a most interesting account of that distinguished bridal, by one of the noble ladies-in-waiting, in a letter to a friend in Norfolk, of which I have been favoured with a copy, it is especially noticed "that there were no foolish ceremonies practised—such as throwing the stocking, handing the posset-cup, or breaking the cake—such as had been done at previous royal weddings."

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXX.

SUMMARY

Sincerity of the reconciliation between Mary and Darnley—She surprises him writing letters to his father—He allows her to read them—She finds them full of her praises—Tender scene between the royal pair—Darnley's devotion to his religious duties—Proceedings of the conspirators—The Earl of Moray determines to absent himself—Asks the Queen's leave to visit his wife—His foreknowledge of the murder—His oracular prediction—Gay Sunday at Holyrood—Marriage of Bastian and Margaret—Queen presides at the wedding-dinner—She is banqueted by the Bishop of Argyll—Four o'clock supper—She brings her nobles to pay their court to Darnley—Powder deposited in her chamber while she is with Darnley—Her tender parting with Darnley—She is escorted by her nobles to Holyrood Abbey—Gives her presence to the bridal ball—Puts the bride to bed—Queen surrounded by the noblest ladies in Scotland—Their respect for her—The assassins enter the house of Kirk-of-Field in her absence, and murder Darnley—Alarm caused by the explosion—Queen sends to inquire the cause—Darnley's body is discovered in the orchard—Contradictory accounts of the manner of his death—Various depositions collated and considered.

THE affectionate terms of conjugal union that subsisted between Mary Stuart and Darnley, during his residence in the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field, are illustrated by the following interesting fact: One day the royal wife, entering the chamber of her consort unexpectedly, discovered him in the act of closing letters he had been amusing himself during her absence in writing to his father. She had had such bitter and repeated cause to complain of the inimical manner in which Lennox had exerted his paternal influence over the mind of his son, that a shade of uneasi-

ness was perhaps perceptible in her countenance. Darnley, with equal good sense and good feeling, allowed her to read the letters. She did so in his presence, and found they were filled with her praises and details of her kind attentions to himself, assuring his father "that he was now satisfied that she was entirely his"—expressing at the same time "his confident hope that all things would change for the better.[1]" Transported with joy at so gratifying a testimonial of her husband's love and sincere appreciation of her affectionate conduct, Mary tenderly embraced and kissed him many times, and told him "how much pleasure it gave her to see that he was satisfied with her, and that no lingering cloud of jealousy or suspicion was hovering on his mind."[2] The recollections of that sweet moment must have been consolatory to Mary in the long years of misery that were destined to succeed the tantalising hopes of domestic happiness with which it flattered her.

Darnley, by way of employing his solitude profitably, had combined a course of devotional exercises with the sanitary process prescribed by his physicians, having made what the church of which he was a member terms "a retreat,"[3] or interval of self-recollection, penance and prayer, preparatory to his reappearance on the arena of public life. Reconciled both to his consort and himself, he was rapidly recovering his health and strength, and expected to resume his place in the world under auspicious circumstances. On Sunday, February 9—the last he was ever to spend in life—"he heard mass devoutly," we are told. The more earnestness Darnley manifested in the duties of his unpopular faith, the more dangerous became his position with the lay abbots, secularised priests and impropriators of the lands of the church he was desirous of restoring,—such men as Sir James Balfour parson of Fliske, his brother Robert Balfour provost of Kirk-of-Field, Archibald Douglas parson of Glasgow, and many others, who, having abandoned their vows and kept their temporalities, could anticipate nothing but ruin and degradation, if indeed

[1] Buchanan's History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 319. [2] Ibid.
[3] Letter of the Bishop of Mondivi to the Duke of Tuscany.

they escaped the stake, in the event of his regaining that conjugal influence over the mind of the Queen, of which nothing but his own folly and misconduct had ever deprived him. He was now arriving at years of discretion, had seen and acknowledged his faults, and promised to become all his royal wife could desire. She had accepted his penitence, and the influence of their spiritual directors would in all probability be successfully exerted to prevent future quarrels between them, and to insure the education of their son in the tenets of the Church of Rome. These were alarming contingencies to every member of the confederacy banded against him, and to Bothwell as much as to any one. The Queen had arranged to hold a court at Holyrood Abbey on Monday, February 10, for the farewell audience of the Savoyard ambassador, Count Moretta, and his suite. She probably intended that her husband should reappear in state with her; but that dismal morrow, which his eyes were never to behold, dawned under circumstances of woe and horror that rendered all appointments of human wisdom or policy nugatory.

The gunpowder, brought by Bothwell's order from Dunbar, had been conveyed on the Saturday evening to his lower apartments in Holyrood Abbey, by his vassal kinsman, John Hepburn of Bolton. The acting committee for the murder then hasted forward their operations, with full intent that the deed should be enterprised on the Sunday soon after midnight.[1] The Earl of Moray, true to his cautious policy, in order to be out of the way while inferior villains performed the butcher's work, requested the Queen's permission "to cross into Fifeshire to visit his lady, who had sent word to him," he said, "that she was ill of a burning fever, much swollen, with pustules breaking out all over her,"[2] which, if true, was probably an attack of small-pox. The Queen entreated him to delay his departure only one day, to assist at her Court to be holden on the morrow for the leave-taking of the Savoyard ambassade. Moray protested "the impossibility of delay, as his wife was in danger of premature childbirth,

[1] Deposition of Hay of Tallo—Anderson. [2] Buchanan.

and might possibly be dead before he arrived, unless he used despatch in hastening to her."[1] Feminine humanity forbade the Queen to detain him after this piteous plea for immediate permission to depart, however unseasonable the absence of her principal minister of state might be from her diplomatic circle on the morrow.

"At nine o'clock on the Sunday morning," says Hubert, in his first confession,[2] "I went to the Queen's chamber, where I heard the news that my Lord of Moray had been to take his leave of the Queen, to go and see my lady his wife. I instantly perceived by these words that he did so in order to get him out of the way of the wicked deed-doing, and remembered the words I had said of my Lord of Moray to my Lord of Bothwell, and his rejoinder — namely, 'My Lord of Moray will neither help nor hinder in the matter; but it's all one.'" This observation being permitted to go forth uncontradicted by Moray, is a strong corroboration of his guilty cognisance of the intended murder. The occult inspirer of all the various agencies employed in the mysterious tragedy thus glided off the stage, leaving to them the danger, the responsibility, and the penalty of its consummation. No one can deny that Moray was an accomplice in the assassination of Riccio, because his signature appears to the band for the slaughter of that defenceless foreigner; nor can it be supposed that a person capable of entering into one league for murder would be more scrupulous in regard to another. In consequence of the assassination of Riccio having been perpetrated in his absence, Moray had escaped all the inconveniences in which the acting murderers were involved, and succeeded in persuading his royal sister of his innocence, in spite of her husband's assurances to the contrary. The policy that had answered his purpose so well in that instance was to be again repeated, with as good success, in regard to the immolation of his personal foe and rival Darnley, who had provoked a far more deadly debt of vengeance than the insignificant Piedmontese Riccio. Darnley had, on his first arrival in

[1] Buchanan. [2] Laing's Appendix.

Scotland, supplanted him in the favour of the Queen, driven him from the helm of State, impertinently scanned the length and breadth of his questionably acquired demesnes, and pronounced the ominous sentence "that he had too much for a subject." Then Moray's first conspiracy to assassinate Darnley at the Kirk of Beith had been retaliated by secret practices against him, and open threats of vengeance. Moray's conduct in regard to this formidable opponent was clearly dictated by the same feeling which, a few months later, he boldly expressed in regard to a less dangerous enemy: "If he purposes, as I understand, our destruction, and to cut our throats, ye shall be assured that we shall find remedy, and cut his, and all them that would do so, rather than our own should be *cuttit*."[1]

It was affirmed by Lord Herries, "that Moray, as he was crossing the ferry, the same evening he left Edinburgh, on his passage into Fifeshire, observed to one of his dependents, a gentleman of that country, 'This night, ere morning, the Lord Darnley shall lose his life.'"[2] Lord Lindsay of the Byres—Moray's sister's husband—stoutly denied that his *gude-brother* had ever used such words, and gave the lie direct to Herries, who, as he spoke from hearsay, could not prove his assertion; nor was it likely that a statesman so cautious and feline in his practice as Moray would have committed himself by such plain speech. Hearsay had interpreted too literally the oracular intimation which Moray had uttered to his own creatures, in the malignant excitement of his spirit, as the appointed hour drew nigh. "This night the King will be cured of all his maladies!"—a sarcastic equivoque, which might have been verified as a loyal prediction by the happy recovery of the princely invalid, if the cruel purpose of the assassins had proved abortive.[3]

[1] Hamilton State Papers, No. 22.

[2] Lesley's Defence of Queen Mary's Honour.

[3] Lord Lindsay's Challenge, in Anderson's Collections. This statement appears in a letter addressed by the Earl of Huntley, Gavin Hamilton, and Lesley, Bishop of Ross, to the English Commissioners appointed to hear the evidences for and against her. A most able and logical defence of their unfortunate Sovereign, being a true digest of all the arguments contained in their replies to the calumnies of her accusers, printed in

The following incident, which is gravely related by Buchanan as one of the prodigies at that time accompanying, or rather a little preceding the regicide, leads to the inference that it was an event not unexpected in the neighbourhood of St Andrews: "One James Lundin, a Fife gentleman, having been long sick of a fever, about noonday, before the King was killed, lifted himself a little out of bed, as if he had been astonished, and cried out to those that stood by him, with a loud voice, 'Go help the King, for the parricides are just now murdering him!' and a while after he called out with a mournful tone, 'Now it is too late to help, for he is already slain.' He himself died shortly after he had uttered these words."[1]

But while the passions, the superstitions, or the consciences of those privy to the fell design, to which so many of the Peers and Privy Councillors of Scotland were pledged, were variously affected as the hour for its fulfilment drew near, and omens and presages of the tragic event astonished the marvellous in the "kingdom of Fife," all went on merrily in Edinburgh. That fatal Sunday was a day of unwonted festivity in the Court. It was the last gay day in Mary Stuart's reign and life. The nuptial knot was duly tied in the Chapel-royal of Holyrood between Sebastian Paiges and his true-hearted Scotch bride, the faithful Margaret Carwood. The Queen had provided the wedding-dinner, which she honoured with her presence,[2] and having promised to return to the mask and ball in the evening, "and to put the bride to bed,"[3] she visited Darnley at the house of Kirk-of-Field, with whom she spent some time. At four o'clock she, with all her nobles, supped at the grand banquet to which she had been invited by the Bishop of Argyll, to meet the departing members of the Savoyard ambassade. When

Caussin's History of Mary's Life, condensed, as that writer certifies, from the more diffuse original, which he had studied at length in a collection entitled "Les Actes de la Royne d'Escosses."

[1] History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 323-4.

[2] Hubert's First Confession—Laing's Appendix.

[3] Buchanan's History of Scotland. This author mentions the performance of that complimentary ceremony as the fashion of the times.

she rose from table, she was attended by all the great nobles present to the house at Kirk-of-Field, where she brought them with her into her husband's chamber,[1] for them to pay their devoir to him, and probably their first compliments of congratulation on his recovery. This was evidently a small state-reception or court held in Darnley's hall, to amuse him, and pass the interval between her return from the four o'clock Episcopal supper and going to the masked ball at Holyrood, to which she had promised to give her presence. Meantime Bothwell, instead of attending her Majesty with the other nobles to the house of Kirk-of-Field, slipped away in the bustle of the uprising from the Bishop's table, and went to hold a secret council with his ruffian rout in the hall of his lower apartments at Holyrood Abbey, where the gunpowder that had been brought in the night before by Hepburn of Bowton was standing in a trunk and a leathern mail. These, by his directions, were conveyed by his porter, William Powrie, and Pat. Wilson, his tailor, down the Blackfriars' Wynd, and through the garden-gate into the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field.[2]

There are several discrepancies in the depositions of the tortured witnesses who assisted in the preparations for the crime—Powrie swearing "that the trunk and mail were carried on two of Bothwell's horses," and Hay of Tallo deposing "that they were carried at two several times on a grey nag belonging to Herman, Bothwell's page.[3] One of these depositions is therefore false, perhaps both; for what reliance can be placed on avowals wrung through the infliction of mortal agony from persons of evil lives, from whom the devotion of martyrs to the cause of truth can never be expected? One thing, however, is certain, that not one of the depositions of Bothwell's servants and vassals tends in the slightest degree to criminate the Queen, and that with their dying breath several of them

[1] Hubert's First Confession.
[2] Ibid., and the other depositions in Anderson and Laing.
[3] The depositions are all in Anderson's Collections, vol. ii.

declared her innocence in the face of God and the people of Edinburgh.[1]

Bothwell, who seems to have performed much work in a very little time, after he had met and issued his orders to his *meiné* in the hall or lobby of his lower suite of apartments at Holyrood House, paid a short visit to his lady mother, stepped into the Laird of Ormiston's lodgings, at the house of Katie Thome in the Blackfriars' Wynd, and after conferring with him and Hob Ormiston, took them with him into the Cowgate in quest of Hepburn and Hay. Meeting these, he gave them their cue, and sent them to receive the powder of Powrie and Wilson, at the gate of the Blackfriars' Garden, then proceeded to the house of Kirk-of-Field in company with Hubert, whom he charged "to admit the three lairds, first into the house, through the postern, and then into the Queen's chamber, to deposit the powder." "Alas, my lord!" cried Hubert in despair, "you command me to my death." "Have I ordered *you* to do anything?" asked Bothwell. "My lord, I know it will be my death," repeated Hubert. "But tell me why?" demanded Bothwell. "If I had commanded thee to do what the others are about to do, thou mightest have said so; but I know well thou hast no heart. The others shall do it all without thee. They can enter very well without thee, for there is not a door in that house to which they have not got keys."[2] By the time they reached the house at Kirk-of-Field, Hubert reluctantly consented to do as he was required. Bothwell, leaving him in the little court below, ascended to the King's chamber, where the Queen was entertaining her consort and the noble circle she had brought there to pay their court to him. Hubert went into the kitchen, and asked the cook to give him a candle, which he lighted, and then admitted Hepburn and Hay into the Queen's bedroom. Finding it difficult to bring the trunk and mail in at the garden wicket, they took out the powder, which was in pokes or bags. These they carried into the Queen's

[1] Lesley's Defence of Queen Mary's Honour. Blackwood. Chalmers. Goodall.

[2] Hubert's First Confession.

chamber, and threw them down on the floor. Bothwell, meantime, hearing more of their operations than he liked, became alarmed, and, hastening down stairs to them, exclaimed, "My God, what a din ye make! They may hear above all ye do." Then observing Hubert, he roughly asked what he did there, and bade him follow him up-stairs into the King's chamber. "I did so," continues Hubert, "and placed myself by my Lord of Argyll, with whom my Lord of Bothwell was talking; and the said Lord of Argyll gave me a caress, by putting his hand on my back, but without speaking a word to me."[1] This simple statement confutes Buchanan's assertion, "that the appearance of Hubert was the signal preconcerted between the Queen and Bothwell that all things were ready for her departure," since, it appears, he followed at Bothwell's heel, "and remained about the space that one might repeat a Pater-noster before the Queen rose to depart." If Mary had had any knowledge of the designs of the conspirators, she would not surely have been guilty of the temerity of bringing her nobles with her from the Bishop's banquet as she undoubtedly did, and introducing them into the house—so small a house withal—while Bothwell and his people were occupied in depositing, in her own chamber, the fatal combustibles destined to effect her husband's destruction the same night. "Mary," as the honest American biographer, Jacob Abbott, pithily observes, "was no fool, and therefore it is not reasonable to believe she acted in a manner so truly absurd."

The nobles who had attended the Queen to the house of Kirk-of-Field were waiting to escort her to Holyrood Abbey, where she had arranged to sleep that night; but Darnley being more than usually reluctant to part with her, she continued to linger by his side till it was more than time for an invalid like him to have been in bed. It was not, indeed, till the eleventh hour that she rose to depart, observing, as she did so, "that it was later than she had thought; but she must not break her promise to Bastian and his bride." Darnley, in lover-like mood, desiring still to detain her, she

[1] Hubert's First Confession.

drew a valuable ring from her finger, and, placing it on his as a pledge of her affection, kissed and embraced him with endearing words of leave-taking, and promises that she would soon return to visit him again;[1] and so they parted, to meet in life no more.

Mary's conduct on this occasion has been attributed to hypocrisy by those whose interest it was to impute her husband's murder to her, and who have been reduced to so many palpable falsehoods and perversions of facts to make out a case against her. But even if she had been as guilty as Buchanan was employed by the usurpers of her throne to paint her, what object, it may be asked, could she have proposed to gain by such demeanour? Was it to charm Bothwell that she lavished caresses on his intended victim? The most pitiless ruffian in the world would have turned away in horror from a woman playing a part so fiend-like. Was it to impose on the other nobles? They were no friends of Darnley—nay, were for the most part banded against him.[2] Was it to delude himself? That had been needless trouble, if she were in the plot, and knew he had not three hours of life remaining. It is, indeed, impossible to assign a motive for her feigning tenderness it was so natural for her to feel, and, feeling, to express, in return for his lover-like reluctance to part with her, especially when she was leaving him to join a gay scene, in which he was not in a condition to participate, though fond of pleasure, and just at the age to enjoy a mask and bridal ball. The following report, made by the French envoy, the Lord of Clernault, who had opportunities of obtaining correct information from his country men and women in her household, affords both interesting and important evidence as to the conduct of Queen Mary: "The King being lodged at one end of the city of Edinburgh, and the Queen at the other, the said lady came to see him on a Sunday evening, which was the 9th of this month, about seven o'clock, with all the principal lords of her court, and, after having remained with him two or three hours, she withdrew, to

[1] Buchanan, Chalmers, Tytler, Bell.
[2] See Archibald Douglas's Letter to Queen Mary—Robertson's Appendix.

attend the bridal of one of her gentlemen, according to her promise; and if she had not made that promise, it is believed that she would have remained till twelve or one o'clock with him, seeing the good understanding and union in which the said lady Queen and the King her husband had been living for the last three weeks."[1]

The Queen was probably conveyed to Holyrood Abbey in her litter, on account of the distance, which is three quarters of a mile, and the dirty state of the streets at that period and season of the year. Powrie, in his deposition, states "that as he and his assistant, Wilson, were carrying the empty powder trunk and mail back, up through the Blackfriars' Wynd, they saw the Queen's Grace ganging before them with lighted torches."[2] These would be borne, according to the custom of the times, by her noble attendants, forming a double line on either side the person of their liege lady, preceded and followed by her inferior officers and their servants with links.

"Immediately her Majesty arrived at the Abbey," deposes that reluctant accomplice in the murder, Nicholas Hubert, "she ascended to the room, and entered where the bridal was held; as for me, I withdrew myself into a corner, where my Lord Bothwell seeing me, came to me, and asked 'what I meant by putting on that dismal look before the Queen?'[3] adding 'that, if I did so, he would dress me in such a fashion as I had never been before.'" Now, it must be plain to every one that, if the Queen had been a party to the crime, Bothwell would not have menaced his wretched tool on account of his wearing a dismal countenance before her, but exhorted him not to excite, by his looks and manner, the suspicions of the company assembled to share in the festivities of that gay evening. But clearly it was her observation that was dreaded, lest she should inquire the cause of Hubert's dejection, and his agitated replies give rise to questions of a more alarming nature,[4] tending

[1] State Paper Office MS., Feb. 16, 1566-7,—in the French of the period.
[2] Anderson's Collections. [3] Paris's First Confession, Laing's Appendix.
[4] Nothing can, in fact, afford clearer evidence of Mary's ignorance of the plot for her husband's murder than this first confession of Hubert. Mal-

to the discovery of his villany, and that of her other most trusted officers of state, who were associated with him in the confederacy for Darnley's murder. As the Queen did not arrive at Holyrood Abbey till past eleven, which was very late for an evening entertainment in the sixteenth century, she did not tarry quite an hour in the ball-room, but retired with the bride and her other ladies just before midnight. The company then broke up and dispersed. Mary was attended on that last gay evening of her life and reign by the Countesses of Mar, Atholl, and Bothwell, among others of the noble matrons of Scotland. These would have been substantial witnesses to bring forward against her, if her conduct had, in the slightest manner, deviated from that which beseemed a Queen and a virtuous woman; but, so far from impugning her character, they have borne testimony in her favour: Lady Bothwell, by refraining from imputing blame to her in any way, regarding her marriage with Bothwell; Lady Mar, by teaching the infant Prince to love and venerate his hapless mother; and Lady Atholl, by petitioning, after her husband's death, for leave to come and share the hardships of poor Mary's comfortless English prison-house—and more than that, for she was desirous of bringing her youthful daughter with her, to assist her in waiting on her captive Sovereign, and bearing her company, and this without salary or prospect of reward.[1] Can it be supposed that any noble mother would have permitted, much less desired,

colm Laing, the most able of all the writers who have adopted the self-interested calumnies of the conspirators against Mary, put forth by their venal organ Buchanan, and the political agents of Cecil, insists on the authenticity and credibility of this document. It contains, indeed, such strong internal evidences of reality, that we fully coincide with him in its being genuine evidence; and for this reason reject the so-called Second Confession of Nicholas Hubert or French Paris as spurious, because one or the other must be false, and the second is palpably a fabrication between Moray and his secretary, Alexander Hay, to bolster up the forged letters and defame the Queen. As poor Hubert could not write, it is unlikely he could read the paper to which Moray's secretary made him put his mark. He had no trial; and though Queen Elizabeth requested he might be sent to London, Moray hanged him, that he might not contradict what had been put forth in his name.

[1] Letter of Queen Mary to M. de Mauvissière de Castelnau—Jebb's Collections.

such domestication for her young daughter, unless perfectly satisfied of the innocence of Queen Mary? It is, indeed, a fact that ought to outweigh the implications of ten thousand anonymous letters and political libels, like those Buchanan was employed to write in her defamation by Moray, Morton, Lethington, and the other secret-service-men of England.

After the Queen had retired, Bothwell, according to the depositions of Powrie, Dalgleish, and Hubert, went into his chamber, "and changed his velvet hose passamented and trussed with silver, and his black satin doublet of the same fashion, for a pair of black hose, and a white canvass doublet, and took his long riding-cloak of sad English cloth, called 'the new colour,' about him, and, attended by the said deponents, Powrie, Dalgleish, Wilson, and Hubert, went down the turnpike stair leading from his high chamber, over the gateway in Holyrood Abbey, through a postern door into the Queen's garden, and so by the back of the Mint and stables towards the Canongate. As they came by the entry of the Queen's south garden, one of the sentinels who stood at the gate leading to the outer close challenged them, by asking, 'Who goes there?' They answered, 'Friends.' 'What friends?' asked the sentinel. 'Friends to my Lord Bothwell,' was their reply, and they were allowed to pass. When they came up the Canongate to the Nether Bow, they found it locked. Pat. Wilson called to John Galloway, the porter, to come down and open the port for them. John Galloway was in no haste to comply with the requisition; and when at last he came down, after keeping them some time waiting, roughly inquired of them 'what they did out of their beds at that time of night?'" The answer to this would be obviously, that they were returning from the bridal ball and mask at the Abbey. They were allowed to pass through the gate, and, calling at Bassentine's house, inquired for the Laird of Ormiston; being told he was not there, they passed through a close below Blackfriars' Wynd, and through the gate of the Black Friars, till they came to the back-wall

[1] See the depositions in Anderson, and Laing's Appendix.

or dike of the town.[1] Bothwell and Hubert passed in over the wall, and told the others to tarry for them there, their object being now to fire the powder, which the aforenamed witnesses agreed in swearing "had been deposited on the floor of the Queen's bedroom, immediately under the King's chamber." No mention is made, in the examinations of any of these unhappy men, of the mines that had been privily sunk in the vaults and foundations of the building. It is, however, distinctly stated, both in the letter of the Privy Council, and on the trial of Morton, by whom the fact was not denied, in that also of Archibald Douglas, and in the indictment of John Binning, the servant of Archibald Douglas, when at last arraigned as accomplices in this mysterious murder, "that mines were sunk by them and their assistants in the vaults and angles of the walls of the house, by which it was overthrown and blown up from the foundations."[2] Malcolm Laing resists this evidence, assigning as his reason, that "there could have been no time for mines to have been sunk after the arrival of the royal pair." It was, of course, done before their arrival by the master of the house, who was one of the conspirators, his brother Sir James Balfour, Lethington, Morton, and Archibald Douglas, with the assistance of their servants, unknown to the blundering Border chief and his followers, who were thus, when engaged in firing the superficial train they had been deluded into the suicidal folly of scattering in the Queen's chamber, in imminent peril of "hoisting with their own petard." It is more than probable that the secret mining company—to wit, Lethington, Morton, the two Balfours, and Archibald Douglas—calculated on this result taking place, for they were as false to him as they were to their Sovereigns, ay, and, as they proved in the sequel, to each other.

The effect of the fire on the train scattered on the floor of the Queen's chamber would have been, to blow up the ceiling of that apartment, the floor of the King's chamber,

[1] In Edinburgh at present the portion of the old town-wall, in this locality, is called the "Back wall."

[2] Arnott's Criminal Trials.

his bed, and the roof of the building, but assuredly not to tear up the basement of the house—for every explosion of powder bursts upward, scattering, of course, the surrounding walls, but not descending to the foundations, unless, as the event demonstrated, they had been undermined, and charged with a sufficient portion of the same dread combustible. That this was the case is proved beyond dispute by the fact, that great stones, ten feet in length, were dislodged from the foundations of the house, and hurled to a distance.

Notwithstanding the general agreement, in the depositions of Bothwell's servants, as to the leading points tending to prove him the leader of the ruffian band by whom the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field was blown up, there are some of those discrepancies on minor points which never are to be found in a plain ungarbled narrative of facts. Thus Powrie, Bothwell's porter, swears "that he was sent by John Hepburn to purchase a six halfpenny candle of Geordie Burn's wife in the Cowgate;"[1] while Hubert affirms, with far greater probability, "that he went into the kitchen and asked the cook for a candle, which he lighted there."[2] Surely there would be no lack of candles in a royal lodging; and if the Queen were in the plot, as asserted by those who made the tragic death of her husband a pretext for robbing her of her throne, all things required for the perpetration of the crime would have been ready for the use of Bothwell and his gang. John Hepburn and Hay of Tallo deposed "that the train in the Queen's chamber was fired by them at two o'clock on the Monday morning, February 10, by means of a lunt, or soft tow rope, of which they ignited one end, and placed the other in a small wooden trough, that it might burn gradually till it reached the powder; that after locking the three doors after them they rejoined Bothwell and his servants in the yard, where they stood to watch the event a quarter of an hour;[3] that Bothwell, growing impatient, asked "if there

[1] Anderson's Collections.
[2] First Confession of Nicholas Hubert, or French Paris—Laing's App.
[3] Anderson's Collections. Laing's Appendix.

were not any place where he could see if the lunt were still burning?" To which they replied, "there was only one window through the gable to the south."[1] This was in the King's wardrobe, or little gallery, where the servants slept —particulars which, it is reasonable to suppose Bothwell, as a member of the Court, must have known a little better than the two Liddesdale lairds. However, we are quoting from the depositions of the tortured witnesses, who also deponed "that Bothwell would at last have gone into the house himself, to see why the explosion did not take place, but was stopped by Hepburn, who said to him, 'Ye need not,' and within short space it fired. When they saw the house rising, and heard the crack, they ran their way down the wynd from the Blackfriars' Gate."[2] In his first confession, Hubert says: "The said Lord Bothwell went to the garden-gate, and then came towards us; then John Hepburn and John Hay came out, when, soon after they had spoken to him, behold, a tempest or thunder-clap rose up, and for fear thereof I fell to the earth, with every hair on my head pricking up like awls; and I cried, 'Alas, my lord! what is this?' He said to me, 'I have been myself in many great and terrible adventures, but never enterprise so affrayed me as this.' I said to him, 'Forsooth, my lord, no good can come of this, either to you or yours.' 'O beast!' cried he, menacing me with his sheathed dagger; and then began to move quickly on, and we after him. He wanted to go by Leith Wynd, but could not, and thereupon sent John Hepburn to call the porter to open the gate of the Nether Bow, every one also beginning to come. He went by the back of the Cannogait," and so through the Queen's gardens into the Abbey of Holyrood, where, ascending to his own apartments, he called for a drink, undressed, and went to bed,[3] where he undoubtedly was found with his countess, when the alarm of the explosion, which had roused the slumbering city, reached the Palace.[4] But how, if he were really present at the firing of the train at the

[1] Anderson's Collections. Laing's Appendix.
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] Bothwell's Memorial—Bell's Appendix. Lingard's History of England.

time deposed by the above seven witnesses, could this be? for the distance between the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field, by the nearest cut to Holyrood Abbey, is three quarters of a measured mile, and, according to all the depositions, he had lost time by making an attempt to cross the slope at Leith Wynd, which he found too high to leap, "because of his sair hand." He had therefore to retrace his steps, and to wait till the porter could be wakened to unfasten the Nether Bow gate. All the people were by that time roused by the explosion, and on the way to the Palace, where, too, his sleeping apartments were on the highest storey. It, therefore, would have been impossible for him to have been at the blowing-up of the house of Kirk-of-Field, held the dialogue with Hubert deposed by the latter, and yet to have been found in bed in one of the highest chambers in Holyrood Abbey when the alarm came. If not seven witnesses, but seventy thousand, were to have deposed it, no historian can reasonably be blamed for discrediting their testimony, especially as it was extorted by torture, and written down by Moray's secretary and accomplice in treason. The fact is, on the contrary, clearly apparent, that Bothwell, in like manner as Morton, Lethington, and the other titled conspirators, who were pledged each "to send one or two of their followers and servants to the deed-doing," performed his crime by deputy; nor does that circumstance in the slightest degree diminish his guilt, since the person who employs bravoes to slay another is the actual murderer, the bravoes merely his instruments. It is, however, probable that Bothwell, after the ball was ended, did, as stated, change his court dress for another, and go forth privately with Hubert, to see that all things were in proper train at the house of Kirk-of-Field for the perpetration of the cruel design, and, leaving his kinsman John Hepburn of Bowton, and Hay, to fire the train, return to the Abbey in time to be found quietly in bed with his wife there when the explosion roused the slumbering city. He had actually been, according to the statement of William Powrie, "in his bed about half an hour, when Mr George Hacket came to the gate and knocked,

and desired to be let in; and when he came in he appeared to be in a great *affray* [fright], and was black as any *pik* [pitch], and not one word to speak. My lord inquired, 'What is the matter, man?' and he answered, 'The King's house is blown up, and I trow the King be slain.' And my lord cried, 'Fie! treason!' and then he rose and put on his clothes; and thereafter the Earl of Huntley and many came in to my lord, and they gaed into the Queen's house."[1] Alarmed by the explosion, which resembled a volley of five-and-twenty or thirty cannon fired off at once, she had just sent to inquire the cause,[2] when the Earls of Argyll, Atholl, Huntley, and Bothwell, with their ladies, and the Countess of Mar, rushed into her presence,[3] with the agitating tidings of what was supposed to have happened at the house of Kirk-of-Field. The Queen instantly ordered Bothwell, her Lieutenant, to proceed thither with the guards, of whom the captain was James Stuart of Ochiltree, in order to ascertain what had really occurred. Every one hurried with him to the scene of the mysterious tragedy. The Provost's house no longer existed; the very foundation-stones were upheaved from the vaults, and the whole fabric reduced to a shapeless heap of ruins; or, to use the language of the Privy Council, "dung into dross."

The mangled remains of Glen and Macaig, the grooms of the King's chamber, and two boys, their attendants, were found crushed to death beneath the masses of disjointed masonry. Thomas Nelson, another of his servants, was the only one who had the good fortune to be taken out alive.[4] An interval of suspense as to the fate of Darnley occurred; search was made for him among the ruins of the house in vain. It was not till past five o'clock on the Monday morning that his lifeless body was found lying under a tree in a little orchard about eighty yards from the ruins on the other side of the wall. He had nothing on save his night-shirt, but his furred pelisse and pantouffles were close by; and near him was the

[1] Anderson's Collections. Laing's Appendix.
[2] Clernault's Report—State Paper Office MS.
[3] Buchanan's Detection.
[4] Sir James Melville's Memoirs. Tytler. Chalmers.

corpse of his faithful servant, William Taylor. It was at first supposed that both had been blown into the air, and carried by the force of the explosion to that distance clean over the wall; but in that case they must have been scorched and blackened by the effects of the powder, if not torn limb from limb, and smashed by the violence of the fall. There was not, however, the slightest bruise or fracture on their persons. The smell of fire had not passed over their garments, nor was a hair of their heads singed.

It is to be observed that no information as to the actual means employed in the murder of Darnley is to be obtained from the depositions of Bothwell's gang, further than that he was blown up by the gunpowder lodged in the Queen's bedroom. This was the impression Morton, Lethington, and their guilty accomplices in the crime desired to produce, in order to supersede all inconvenient investigation, and transfer the suspicion from themselves and their agents to the royal widow. Thus, in that gross fabrication called the Second Confession of French Paris, the unfortunate foreigner is actually represented as addressing these words to the Queen: "Madam, my Lord Bothwell has commanded me to bring him the keys of your chamber, because he wishes to do something there which is to blow the King your husband up into the air by means of the powder that is to be placed there;" — Hay of Tallo is also made to affirm[1] "that when he was at Seton, my Lord Bothwell called on him, and said, 'What thought thou when thou saw him blown in the air?' and that he answered, 'Alas, my lord! why speak ye that? for whenever I hear sic a thing, the words wound me to death, as they ought to do you.'" These are palpable fictions, for it is certain that Darnley never was blown up in the air, or some traces of the action of fire and gunpowder must have appeared on his linen and his skin; nor could he have been flung from a height to so great a distance without a bone being broken, or even an abrasion of the skin. Sir James Mel-

[1] Laing's Appendix. Anderson's Collections.

ville says "it was spoken by a page, that before the house was blown up, the King was taken forth and brought down to a low stable, where he was suffocated by a *serviet* or napkin being thrust into his mouth, and his respiration stopped."[1] Buchanan affirms that, "besides Bothwell and his men, two distinct parties of the assassins came by different ways to the house of Kirk-of-Field, and that a few of them entered the King's chamber, of which they had the keys, and while he was fast asleep took him by the throat and strangled him, and also one of his servants who lay near him, and carried their bodies through a little gate which they had made on purpose through the city wall into a garden near at hand, and then blew up the house with gunpowder."[2] This version of the manner of Darnley's death has been very generally adopted; but it is certain that the murderers would never have been at the trouble of removing the bodies from the upper chamber into the orchard—no easy task, on account of Darnley's extraordinary height. If they had been slain in their beds, they would, as a matter of course, have been left to be consumed in the conflagration, or buried in the ruins of the house, which was ostensibly blown up to conceal the murder. For what purpose, therefore, are we to suppose the assassins would take the trouble and incur the danger of carrying forth the corpses? The fact that they were not murdered in the house, but on or near the spot where they were found,

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

[2] History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 321-2. In a subsequent page of his History, Buchanan attempts to fix this deed on Archbishop Hamilton. "The Archbishop of St Andrews," says he, "who lodged in the next house, when the proposition of killing the King was made to him, willingly undertook it, both by reason of old feuds between them, and also out of hopes thereby to bring the kingdom to his own family. Upon which, he chooses out eight of the most wicked of his vassals, and commended the matter to them, giving them the keys of the King's lodgings. They then entered very silently into his chamber, and strangled him while he was asleep; and when they had so done, carried out his body through a little gate, of which I spoke before, into an orchard adjoining the walls, and then a sign was made to blow up the house."—Hist. Scot., vol. ii. p. 417. It was on this accusation that the Earl of Lennox proceeded to hang the Archbishop as the murderer of his son, acquitting thereby Bothwell and all those who had been previously put to tortures and death for that crime. What dependence is there to be placed on the assertions of persons by whom a system of false-witness so gross and shameless was resorted to on all occasions?

speaks for itself. Darnley's furred pelisse and pantouffles being near him, and unsinged, indicates the probability that, with the instinctive caution of an invalid dreading an exposure to the cold night-air in his shirt, he had snatched them up when he fled for his life on the first alarm, intending to put them on as soon as opportunity would allow, but that, ere he could do this, he was overtaken by the assassins, and suffocated in the manner described by Melville. A most remarkable confirmation of this conjecture is to be found in a letter from the Pope's nuncio, resident at Paris, communicating to his friend the Grand-duke of Tuscany the following important information on the subject, which he had obtained from Moretta, the Savoyard ambassador to the Court of Holyrood, who was in Edinburgh when this catastrophe occurred:—

"Yesterday arrived here the Père Emondo,[1] in company with Monsignore de Moretta, and neither from the one nor the other can the state of things in Scotland be clearly understood, the which at this time are, by the death of their King, so strangely perplexed, that it is doubtful whether they can be soon composed again. . . . As to the particulars of the death of the King, Monsignore de Moretta is entirely of opinion that this poor Prince, hearing the noise of people round the house trying false keys to open the outlets, rushed forth himself by a door that opened into the garden in his shirt with a pelisse, to fly from the peril, and there was strangled, and brought out of the garden into a little orchard beyond the wall of the grounds; and then the fire blew up the house to slay all the rest that were within, as they conjecture, because the King was found dead, with his pelisse by his side; and some women, whose sleeping-rooms adjoined the garden, affirm to have heard the King cry—'Ah, my kinsmen (*fratelli miei*), have mercy on me, for love of Him who had mercy on us all!'"[2]

[1] Father Edmonds, the Principal of the Society of Jesuits.

[2] From the Italian, printed in Prince Labanoff's Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart, from the original document preserved in the Archives de Medici, dated March 16, 1567. The Bishop of Mondivi, Cardinal di Laurea, was the Nuncio appointed by the Pope for the Court of Scotland, whom Mary had excused herself from receiving at the baptism of the Prince her son.

The endearing claim of consanguinity with which the unfortunate consort of Mary Stuart vainly endeavoured to move the hard hearts of the pitiless ruffians to whom he addressed his touching appeal for mercy, proves that they, the actual murderers, were the Douglas gang, his maternal kindred, led to the perpetration of this foul deed either by Morton or Morton's deputy, Archibald Douglas. That night Archibald Douglas went forth from the back-door of his dwelling-house, after supper, clad, under his gown, in a *secret*, or shirt of light defensive armour, with a steel bonnet on his head, and velvet *mulis* or slippers on his feet, accompanied by his two servitors, John Binning and Thomas Gairner. Fourteen years later, these men, when convicted of the crime of assisting in the murder of the late King Henry (Darnley), confessed the above particulars, and that they passed to the deed-doing with him,[1] adding "that the said Archibald Douglas lost one of his mulis on that occasion"—a circumstance which excited some attention at the time, for, the said mule or slipper being found among the ruins of the King's lodgings at Kirk-of-Field, was known to be his.[2] It was subsequently objected by Archibald Douglas, at his collusive trial in 1586, "that he could have no use for velvet slippers when clad in secret armour;" but their use was obviously to muffle his tread as he ascended the stone stairs to the chamber of his victim, which could thus be approached with noiseless steps. He was clearly one of the three whom Powrie mentions "meeting with Bothwell in the Cowgate, with cloaks about their faces and mulis on their feet."[3] "After Archibald Douglas's return from the perpetration of the deed, he changed his clothes, which were full of clay and foulness, and sent Binning on some errand to a house at the foot of Thropstow's Wynd."[4] On the way there, Binning stated "that he met certain *mussilit* [veiled] men whom he knew not, but suspected to be another party of the assassins, because he thought he recognised the voice of Sir James Balfour's brother, the Provost of Kirk-of-Field, the

[1] Arnott's Criminal Trials. [2] Ibid.
[3] Powrie's Second Examination—in Anderson and Laing's Appendix.
[4] Arnott's Criminal Trials.

man from whom the duplicate keys were obtained; and then Mr John Maitland, Abbot of Coldinghame, and brother to Lethington, came in, and, putting his two hands over his own mouth, made a sign to him to keep quiet." Here, then, were the three distinct parties whom Buchanan affirms "past by different ways to the execution of this foul midnight murder."[1]

A pen-and-ink sketch, slightly tinted with water-colours, of the scene of this startling historic tragedy, taken at

[1] Morton, when many years later condemned by the tardy justice of his country to suffer the penalty of the offended laws for his share in the crime, being asked by his ghostly counsellors, Brand and Drury, to tell "whether the King were strangled or blown up by powder," refused to satisfy their curiosity. He had, however, said enough to convict himself of accompliceship, and when the ministers very properly observed, "that it was a dangerous thing for him that his servant and depender was to pass to see so wicked a purpose, and knowing thereof he stayed him not, seeing it would be counted his deed," he coolly answered, "Mr Archibald was at that time a depender on the Earl of Bothwell, making court for himself, rather than a depender of mine." The following startling admission, however, proves the guilty intelligence between them—"Mr Archibald then, after the deed was done, showed to me that he was at the deed-doing, and come to the Kirk-of-Field yard with Bothwell and Huntley." On being asked if he received in his company Mr Archibald after the murder, he answered "I did indeed;" a thing too notorious to be denied, because, besides publicly colleaguing with him in many ways, he had made him, knowing he had assisted at Darnley's murder, a Lord of Session, a judge, and employed him in that capacity to assist in procuring the condemnation of the Laird of Ormiston, one of the less guilty followers of Bothwell. The ministers told Morton "they suspected his own part to be more foul than he admitted;" and when he asked "for what reason?" they answered, "Because you, being in authority, howbeit you punished others for that murder, punished not Mr Archibald, whom you knew to be guilty thereof." "I punished him not, indeed," was his prevaricating rejoinder, "neither durst I, for the cause before shown."—Morton's Confession—Bannatyne's Memorials. He had shown no other cause for not doing so, save his own foreknowledge of the design. Yet this was the man who, assuming the attitude of a righteous champion of justice and an avenger of innocent blood, led a rebel army against his hapless Queen, inhumanly displaying a banner before her eyes with the effigies of her murdered consort stretched in death, and the infant Prince kneeling and appealing to God for vengeance on the crime. It was by the hardihood of that device Morton contrived to transfer to the widow of his victim the odium of a crime of which he, having foreknowledge, uttered no word of dissuasion to deter his accomplices from perpetrating. And is it on the oath of a man like this, unsupported by the attestation of even his own servants, or the testimony of his tortured captive, Dalgleish, that the eight letters which he pretended were written by the Queen to Bothwell can be accepted in proof of her guilt? Is there a criminal court in Great Britain where evidence of so suspicious a nature would be received, emanating from such a source?

the time, is preserved in our State Paper Office, and has been engraved and published in Chalmers's "Life of Queen Mary," showing the position in which the dead body of Darnley was found, with his furred pelisse beside him and the corpse of his faithful servant Taylor close by. At a little distance appear the picturesque ruins of the Lady Kirk at Field, also the remains of the Blackfriars' monastery, and the desolate heap of scattered and disjointed stones to which the Provost's house was reduced by the explosive force of the gunpowder that had been lodged in the mines that had been sunk in the vaults and low dark places of the building. The trees, the gardens, and enclosures, and Gothic gateway, are apparently depicted with the most graphic minuteness, and are the more interesting, by enabling us to compare the local features of the place as it then was with its present aspect, the ground being now covered with the stately and commodious buildings of the Edinburgh University, devoted to the purposes of learning and science, and bearing ennobling witness to the progress of civilisation in the southern suburb of the good town of Edinburgh.

A legal document, recently discovered, contains information connected with Darnley's murder too curious to be omitted, proving that nineteen persons, at least, were among the actual murderers; also that they were divided into two parties, a third remaining in reserve. Barbara Martine, one of the humble neighbours of the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field, being examined on oath before the Privy Council, deposed "that before the crack rose she past to the window of the house where she dwells in the Friar Wynd, near the Master of Maxwell's lodging, and heard eight men come forth to the Cowgate at the Friar Gate, and pass up the Friar Wynd. Thereafter the crack rose, and eleven men came forth, of whom two had *clear* things (bright armour, probably) on them, and past down the passage that comes from the Friar's, and so into the town. She cried upon the eleven as they past by, and called them traitors, and said

'they had been at some evil turn.'"[1] Not less loyal and courageous than this stout-hearted Scottish matron of low degree was her neighbour, "Meg Crokat, the spouse of John Skirling, servant to the Archbishop of St Andrews, dwelling under the Master of Maxwell's lodging,"[2] who came forward on the same occasion to depose "that she was lying in her house betwixt her *twa* twins when the crack rose; she believed it had been the house above her, and came running to her door, in her sark, alone, and even as she came forth at the door, there came forth at the Friar Gate eleven men, and she past to speak to one of them, and *clekit* [caught] him by the gown, which was of silk; and *speirit* [inquired] at him where the crack was? But they made no answer, and ran fast away, four of them up the Friar Wynd, and the other seven down the Cowgate Port. When they past by her, Barbara Martine was *flyting* [scolding] with them, and calling them 'traitors.'" After that, Meg Crokat deposed "that she ran down to the Cowgate and wakened the folks, and afterwards to the mansion of the Archbishop of St Andrews, where they appeared to be in some trouble." There is also a fragment of the examination of John Pitcairn, Chirurgeon to the Archer Guard, who, though dwelling in the Blackfriars' Wynd, declared "he neither heard nor knew anything of the matter till four o'clock in the morning, when the [*servant*] of Seigneur Francis," whom he describes as "a little lean fellow, came and cried upon the deponent, and desired him to [*hasten*] to his master, which he did, and remained with him till about six" —and there the fragment ends.[3]

But while the manner of Darnley's death remained an inscrutable mystery to all honest men in Scotland, the particulars of his last moments were known to the English

[1] Depositions for the King's Slaughter, Feb. 11, 1566-7—Hopeton MSS., General Register House, Edinburgh, inedited. Communicated by the late Alexander Macdonald, Esq. [2] Ibid.

[3] The Seigneur Francis, who appears to have been taken suddenly ill, and requiring medical aid, was Queen Mary's Italian Master of the Household, Francisco Busso, who accompanied her from France, having lived in her service ever since her marriage with the Dauphin Francis, and was highly esteemed by her for his fidelity. His name was afterwards placarded among those denounced as accomplices in Darnley's murder, but the accu-

Marshal at Berwick. "The King," writes Sir William Drury to Cecil, "was long of dying, and to his strength made debate for his life."[1] How, it may be asked, did Drury come by this information? for with the single exception of Nelson, who, an hour after the Queen's departure to Holyrood, went to bed, "and never knew of anything till wakened by the fall of the house,"[2] no living creature within those fatal walls survived to tell the tale. The report of the princely victim's courageous deportment in his unequal struggle with his murderers, must, therefore, have proceeded either from the assassins themselves, or the conspirators by whom they had been employed, since the tongues of all other witnesses of that scene were hushed in the long silence of the grave. It is worthy of observation that this important communication was not made by Drury to the English Premier till after the arrival of the Earl of Moray at Berwick. There is another passage in Drury's letter which must not be omitted, for it affords indubitable evidence of the fact, that the murder of Darnley was the sequel of the conspiracy for the slaughter of David Riccio and the dethronement of the Queen, and that she was as innocent of the one plot as the other. "It was Captain Cullen's persuasion, 'for more surety to have the King strangled, and not to trust to the train of powder alone,' affirming 'that he had known many so saved.' Sir Andrew Carr, with others, was on horseback near unto the place, for aid to the cruel enterprise, if need had been." Small, indeed, would have been Mary's chance of escape if she had passed that Sunday night beneath the same roof with her consort, when thus environed with so extensive a cordon of traitors; the ferocious ruffian by whom the *corps de reserve* of auxiliary assassins was commanded being no other than he, unworthy of the name of man, who had

sation was never substantiated in the slightest degree. It is certain that his office offered him every facility for compassing Darnley's death by poison, or any other quiet method of destroying him, if he had cherished evil intentions against him, without implicating himself in so clumsy and dangerous a device as the gunpowder plot.

[1] Drury to Cecil, 24th April 1567—State Paper MS. Border Correspondence.

[2] Nelson's Deposition—Laing's Appendix.

menaced his Queen, by putting his loaded dag or horse-pistol, with the trigger down, to her side, during the terrific scene of David Riccio's slaughter, eleven months before, for which outrage she had very properly excluded him from the general act of grace accorded by her in evil hour to the other assassins.[1] The fact of Sir Andrew Carr's returning to Scotland in defiance of her prohibition, and contempt of her powerless regal authority, for the purpose of co-operating with his old accomplices in treason and murder, Morton, Lethington, Ruthven, and Moray, for the execution of their long-premeditated project against their common enemy, Darnley, would alone exonerate Mary from being art and part in that crime.[2]

Malcolm Laing insists much on the credibility of the depositions of Bothwell's servants and vassal lairds, because that distinguished legalist and incorruptible judge, Sir Thomas Craig, assisted in trying them, and concurred in passing sentence of death upon them. If, then, the opinion of Sir Thomas Craig be considered of such weight, the testimony he has borne of Mary Stuart from his personal observation of her words and actions, is surely deserving of quotation in her biography:—

"I have often heard the most serene Princess, Mary Queen of Scotland, discourse so appositely and rationally in all affairs which were brought before the Privy Council, that she was admired by all; and when most of the councillors were silent, being astonished, or straight declared themselves to be of her opinion, she rebuked them sharply, and exhorted them to speak freely, as became unprejudiced councillors, against her opinion, that the best reasons might decide their determinations. And truly her reasonings were so strong and clear that she could turn their hearts to what side she pleased. She had not studied law, yet by

[1] Chalmers; Tytler; Bell.

[2] Drury's revelations to Cecil, while they certify the intelligence of the actual murderers with the English authorities, on the subject of Darnley's death, indicate sufficiently what reliance may be placed on any of the documents produced by the more fortunate members of the conspiracy for the crimination of their blind dupes and instruments.

the natural light of her judgment, when she reasoned of matters of equity and justice, she ofttimes had the advantage of the ablest lawyers. Her other discourses and actions were suitable to her great judgment. No word ever dropped from her mouth that was not exactly weighed and pondered. As for her liberality and other virtues, they were well known."[1] Was this a woman to have committed herself by writing the farragoes of sinful folly to a married man that were produced by that notorious accomplice in her husband's murder, the Earl of Morton, as evidences of her participation in that crime?

Among other apocryphal statements connected with Darnley's last hour of life, it was pretended by those who desired to throw the reproach of Judas on the Queen, that after her departure he sang the 55th Psalm with his servant Taylor. Our eloquent contemporary, Monsieur Dargaud, without reflecting that there were no surviving witnesses but the assassins themselves to report what passed between the murdered victims and their God, actually describes "the sweet monotone of Darnley's chant, and the plaintive cadence of Taylor's responses, and how the mournful melody rose and fell till it gradually died away in silence, the young eyelids closed, and the King and page slumbered on their couches."[2] But this is sheer romance. Taylor was no boy, but an old and faithful English servant who had attended on Darnley from infancy; and as for their psalmody that night, it was a poetic strain, like the notes of the dying swan, unheard by human ear. Darnley's devotional exercises in the house of Kirk-of-Field were those prescribed by his spiritual directors of the Church of Rome, according to the testimony of an ecclesiastic of no less importance than the Principal of the Jesuits, who had no erroneous intelligence on that subject, being in Edin-

[1] Craig's Answer to Doleman, cap. 10, p. 84. Cited by Freebairn in his translation of the Life of Mary Stuart by Pierre le Pesant, Sieur du Bois Guilbert, Lieutenant-General of Police at Rouen, and at the time of his death Advocate-General of Rouen—offices which prove the author to have been well versed in the investigation of evidence.

[2] Histoire de Marie Stuart, by M. Dargaud, vol. ii. p. 44.

burgh at the very time. "Father Edmonds," writes the Papal Nuncio from Paris, "affirms to me, that the King had in the morning, according to his retreat, heard mass, and that he had always been brought up a Catholic, but out of desire of reigning had at times dissembled his ancient faith. If it be so, may the Divine Majesty have mercy on his poor soul."[1]

The distance between the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field, where Darnley was lodged, and the palace of Holyrood being not less than three-quarters of a mile, proves that Bothwell, however guilty as a conspirator and procurer of the murder, was not a personal actor in the tragedy; for even if he had flown back to his own bed with the speed of a flash of lightning, he could not have been found there when the crack rose. Consequently all the details of his proceedings on that occasion, deposed by his tortured servants and French Paris, are fabrications. Spotiswood contradicts his own assertion that Bothwell murdered the King, by declaring, par parenthesis, that he had returned to Holyrood House before the house blew up, and was immediately sent by the Queen to inquire the cause of the explosion—circumstances which naturally rendered her incredulous of the subsequent accusation that the deed was perpetrated by Bothwell, and which also enabled him to prove an *alibi*, when arraigned on the 12th of April for the crime, before the Justiciary Court in the Tolbooth.

As the biographer of Mary Stuart, I have considered it necessary to enter more fully into the evidences of the mysterious tragedy of her husband's murder than has hitherto been done, by collating the information derivable from the Correspondence in the State Paper Office, the declarations of Morton and Binning, and the letter of Archibald Douglas, with the depositions wrung from Bothwell's servants by torture, and palpably garbled to suit the purposes of the more cautious members of the conspiracy who profited by the crime. Such is the undying interest attached to the

[1] Letter of the Bishop of Mondivi to the Grand-Duke of Tuscany—in Labanoff.

subject, such the sacred thirst for truth and contempt for hypocrisy in all true British hearts, that I trust my humble endeavours to deal with the charges against this oppressed and calumniated Queen, according to the righteous laws of evidence, will be appreciated by the generous and the just, irrespective of creed or party.

I have used few arguments on the subject, for argument is as much superseded by the substantial evidence of facts as faith is by sight.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXXI.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary receives the intelligence of her husband's death—She is overwhelmed with grief and horror—Secludes herself in her darkened chamber—Convenes her surgeons to examine his body—Orders it to be brought to Holyrood Abbey—Inquiry into the cause of his death—She proclaims a reward for discovery of his murderers—She takes a last farewell of his remains—Orders his body to be embalmed, and laid in the Chapel-Royal—She removes to Edinburgh Castle—Her *dule* chamber there—Her widow's weeds—Darnley's funeral—Her kindness to his servants—Placards in answer to her proclamation—Bothwell and others denounced as the murderers—She is accused of having been party to the deed—Her second proclamation—Answer to it—Her perplexity—Her health injured by her seclusion—Her Council persuade her to change the air—She goes to Seton—Her cares and difficulties—Pecuniary distress—Calumnies of her circulated—Seditious placards and other stratagems of the conspirators—Change in Mary's Cabinet—Bothwell succeeds Moray as principal Minister of State—His great power—Queen's defenceless position—Correspondence between her and the Earl of Lennox—Coalition between Lennox, Moray, and the other conspirators—Queen returns to Edinburgh Castle to receive English ambassador—Gives audience to Killigrew in her *dule* chamber—His report of the interview.

THE Queen, having been told that the explosion was caused by an accidental fire in the Provost's house at Kirk-of-Field, remained for several hours in suspense as to her husband's fate.[1] After daybreak Bothwell returned to the Abbey, and put an end to any lingering hope she might have entertained by announcing that the lifeless body of the murdered

[1] Bell's Life of Mary Stuart.

Prince had been discovered. Bothwell either felt or feigned great agitation, and appeared to have some difficulty in communicating the dreadful tidings to the Queen. At last he told her "that some powder which had been deposited in the King's lodgings had unfortunately taken fire, blown up the house, and killed his Majesty and all the gentlemen of the bedchamber there in waiting, and that their bodies had been found at some distance from the ruins, in an orchard under the town wall."[1] Overpowered with grief and horror, and weeping bitterly, the Queen withdrew instantly to her own chamber, and having been up the chief part of the night, was, of course, induced by her ladies to go to bed.[2] Buchanan invidiously asserts "that she slept profoundly till the day was far spent;" while, according to Hubert's Second Confession, "Bothwell came into the *ruelle* of her bedchamber alcove, between nine and ten in the morning, and spoke to her secretly under the curtain."[3] As the latter statement has been often adduced as an evidence of impropriety on Mary's part, it is necessary to observe that the like circumstance must have occurred not only at Bothwell's audience, but at that of every other person, whether male or female, who was admitted to a conference with her while etiquette or sickness confined her to her bed. It is affirmed, moreover, in the same document, that "Madame de Briante," Queen Mary's French governess, an elderly matron of the highest rank and most approved discretion, "was present, with other attendants, giving her Majesty her breakfast, during Bothwell's audience."

The fact that this conference between Mary and her minister took place, is confirmed by Sir James Melville, who was waiting in the antechamber to make inquiries after her Majesty's health, and says "that Bothwell, when he came forth, told him that her Majesty was sorrowful and quiet." Such, indeed, like "the stillness of the streams that flow deepest," is the character of intense grief. It would have been easy enough for Mary to have

[1] Mackenzie's Lives. [2] Tytler, Hist. Scot. [3] Laing's Appendix.

affected all the noisy demonstrations of audible sobs, hysterics, and passionate exclamations, if she had been of the deceitful nature imputed to her by her foes; had she been conscious of guilt, she would have seen, at once, the expediency of acting a part. At the death of her first husband, her beloved and ever-regretted Francis II., she had made no such parade; she had then been sorrowful, but quiet, as a true mourner generally is, and no one questioned the reality of her woe. Her demeanour during the first days of her second most calamitous widowhood has been, like every other passage of her life, grossly misrepresented by her libeller Buchanan, and his servile copyists; but the following simple and pathetic record of her affliction, from the pen of a contemporary, who avowedly derived his information from Monsieur de Clernault, the French envoy then at the Court of Holyrood,[1] is more consistent with the feminine tenderness of her disposition, and with nature—

"The fact being communicated to the poor Queen, one can scarcely think what distress and agony it has thrown her into—the more so, because it has happened at a time when her Majesty and the King were on the best possible terms. The said Lord of Clernault has left her in as much affliction as it was possible to be, and one of the most unhappy Queens in the world. It is easy to perceive that this atrocious enterprise has been effected by a mine sunk under ground, although it has not as yet been discovered, nor is it known at present, by whom it has been done."[2]

The remains of poor Darnley were conveyed by a company of men-at-arms, under Bothwell's command, to the adjacent mansion at Kirk-of-Field, till the Queen's instructions could be obtained.[3] Bothwell's conference with her was probably on that painful subject. She sent her surgeons, who were instantly convened, to view the body, and consider the manner of his death. There was a diversity of opinions among them, some reporting that he was blown up by the powder, others that he was strangled.[4] Bothwell

[1] State Paper Office MS. in the French of the period, being the fragment of a letter intercepted by the English authorities at Berwick.
[2] Ibid. [3] Knox, Hist. Ref. Scot., vol. ii. p. 549. [4] Ibid.

himself told Sir James Melville "that the King's house had been burnt, and his body found at a little distance, lying under a tree, which he represented as the strangest accident in the world," frankly desiring Melville "to go up and see him, for there was not a hurt nor mark on all his person." "When I past there to have seen him," observes Melville, "he was laid within a chamber, and kept by one Sandy Durham, but I could not get the sight of him"[1]—a direct contradiction to Buchanan's assertion "that the body was left awhile as a spectacle to be gazed upon by the people, who were continually flocking there to see it."[2]

When the surgeons had made their *post-mortem* examination, the body was placed on a bier, and conveyed, by the Queen's command, to her palace of Holyrood. The whole of that day, the first of her bereavement, she remained in the lugubrious seclusion of the alcove of her darkened chamber, stretched on her bed, in a state of mental stupefaction, paralysed with grief and horror. Powerless herself, she deputed to her Council, as any other female sovereign in the like circumstances would have done, the duty of taking proper steps for the investigation of the mysterious tragedy, and announcing what had occurred to her foreign allies. To the Queen-Regent of France, her mother-in-law, they wrote:—

"MADAM,—The strange mischance that has happened in this city, last night, constrains us to take the boldness of writing these few lines to you, in order to apprise you of the wicked deed that has been perpetrated on the person of the King, in a manner so strange that no one ever heard of the like. About two hours after midnight, his lodging, he being then lying in his bed, was blown up into the air by the force of gunpowder; as far as we can judge by the sound, and the sudden and terrible effect, which has been so vehement that of a hall, two chambers, a cabinet, and a wardrobe, nothing remains, but all has been scattered to a distance and reduced to dust,—not only the roof and floors, but also the walls, even to the very foundations, in such sort that not one stone remains on another. It may easily be perceived that the authors of this crime intended by the same means to have destroyed the Queen, with the greater part of the nobles who are at present in her train, and were with her in the King's chamber till very near midnight; and it was a very near chance that her Majesty did not lodge there herself that night. But God has been so gracious that the assassins were frustrated of that part of their design, having

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs. [2] Hist. Scot., vol. ii. p. 323.

preserved her to take such vengeance as an act so barbarous and inhuman merits. We are after the inquest, and make no doubt soon to come to the knowledge of the persons by whom it was perpetrated, for God will never permit such wickedness to remain hidden and unpunished."[1]

Two at least of the persons by whom this letter was subscribed and sent were principals in the murder—namely, Bothwell and Lethington. No investigation in which these great criminals took a leading part, was likely to be either fairly or legally conducted. Early on the Tuesday morning, February 11, a Court was opened in the Tolbooth, for the examination of the servants of the royal household, and other witnesses, at which the Earl of Argyll, hereditary Justice-General of Scotland, presided, and was assisted by the Justice-Clerk, Sir John Bellenden, and the members of the Privy Council then in Edinburgh.[2] Nothing tending to throw any light on the mystery was elicited, and the Queen ordered a proclamation to be made offering "a reward of £2000, and a pension for life, to whomsoever would reveal and bring to justice the person or persons by whom the horrible and treasonable murder had been committed."[3] Free pardon was promised, at the same time, "to such person, even if a partaker in the crime, provided he would be the means of bringing the authors of the same to light." It was added, "that the Queen's Majesty, unto whom, of all others, the case was most grievous, would rather lose life and all than that it should remain unpunished."[4]

Mary shrank not from the performance of the painful duty of visiting and taking a last sad farewell of the remains of her mysteriously murdered consort. He had been the object of her devoted and most disinterested affection—her kinsman, her husband, the father of her child. Whatever had been his faults, they had been repented of by him, and forgiven by her. She had suffered long and been kind, never imputing blame to him, but excusing such things as were objected against him by her nobles, "as the errors of youth that would correct themselves in time." But when

[1] Laing's Appendix.
[2] Anderson's Collections. Goodall. Chalmers. Laing's Appendix and Fragments of the Depositions in the Register House, Edinburgh.
[3] Ibid. [4] Quoted in Bell's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.

these hopes had appeared about to be realised, by his resolving to become a wiser and a better man, and to have no other will than hers, she was bereaved of him, as it were in the twinkling of an eye, by a stroke the most frightful and inscrutable, a few brief hours after they had parted with the mutual fondness of reconciled lovers. Long and steadfastly she gazed on his lifeless form, in that deep sorrow of the heart whose silence is more expressive than the eloquence of words. Her tears, however, flowed abundantly, and she gave orders that he should be embalmed, wrapt in cere-cloth,[1] and placed in the Chapel-Royal till the day of the funeral. This would be for the commencement of the "lykewake," as the offices of the Church of Rome for the newly departed, who had died in her communion, were then called in Scotland, the bier being surrounded with lighted tapers night and day, and the *Subvenite*, dirge and requiem, sung by the priests and choir, with scarcely any intermission, in the interim before the solemnisation of the funeral and obsequies.

The Treasury Records contain the following entry, which certifies the fact that Darnley's body was embalmed:

"Item the xij day of Februar, by the Queenis Grace's special command, to Martene Pitcanit, ye pothegar, to make furnissing of *droggis*, spices, and otheres necessaries for opening and perfuming of the King's Grace Majesty's umquhile bodie at his acquittance shown upon compt beris, xi. Li."[2]

The day after the occurrence of the tragedy, Mary had the agony of receiving a letter from her faithful servant Archbishop Beton, written by desire of the Spanish ambassador in Paris, to intimate to her "that some formidable enterprise was in preparation against her, and warning her to take care of herself, and double her guards." It was natural for poor Mary to imagine, in the first bitterness of her regret at the tardy arrival of this intimation, that if it had only come to hand two days earlier, it might have been the means of averting the terrible catastrophe of her unfortunate consort; but it would only have delayed it. The confederacy against Darnley's life, which had been formed by Moray

[1] History of Mary Queen of Scots, by Adam Blackwood.
[2] Royal Compotus, General Register House, Edinburgh.

and his faction as soon as her intention to ally herself in marriage with him transpired, had been secretly extending ever since, and at last included more than two-thirds of the nobility of Scotland. The perfidious combination of Bothwell with Moray, Morton, and the other members of the English faction, for the destruction of her husband, with whom he had no quarrel, could never have been suspected by Mary, far less the motives which had impelled him to that league. She had, as has been very fully shown, dealt with him very severely when he was a single man, under suspicion of his cherishing presumptuous intentions of making himself master of her person. The conduct of his accusers having since then given her reason to believe she had been deceived in that matter, she had restored and employed him. His loyal deeds had atoned for his former indiscretions; and after his marriage with a young lady of the blood-royal, their mutual kinswoman, and the important services he had rendered to herself and her consort at the perilous time of their escape from the assassins of David Riccio, she had honoured him with greater confidence than she had ventured to bestow on any other member of her Cabinet, except her ungrateful brother Moray, whose influence was always superior to that of any other person. It was, however, on Bothwell, as the commander-in-chief of all the military force of her realm, both by sea and land, that she relied for defence, either in the event of invasion from England or insurrections at home. As long as he was faithful she had defied all her enemies; his treachery threw her into their snares. "Some one Mary must have suspected of her husband's murder," is the shrewd observation of Malcolm Laing. Some one she doubtless did suspect; and not one, but many; for it was according to reason, and the natural faculty that links present impressions with things past, that the frightful scene of David Riccio's slaughter should immediately recur to her mind, and images of the ferocious assassins whose hands and daggers she had seen reeking with his blood, and who had menaced her with regicidal weapons, should be associated with her ideas of

her husband's tragic fate. Eighty-six of these fell midnight murderers, who had violated the sanctity of her presence, and turned her bedchamber into a shambles, she had been induced—nay, we will use the right word, constrained—by their English protector and advocate, Cecil, seconded by the importunity of Moray and others of her nobles, to pardon and recall to Scotland little more than six weeks agone. Her consort had vehemently objected to this measure, and had been destroyed like their previous victim, David Riccio. How could she suspect Bothwell of contriving and executing a crime for which there was no apparent motive, when the malice of such an army of vindictive homicides had been provoked by Darnley?[1] Alarm for her own safety and that of her infant son naturally prevented the defenceless Princess, environed as she was by traitors, from telling her suspicions too plainly as to the authors of the crime, even when she wrote to Archbishop Beton by her secretary, Lethington, to communicate the terrible event that had occurred.

"Edinburgh, the 11th of February 1566-7.

"Maist reverend Father in God and traist counsellor, we greet you well. We have received this morning your letters of the 27th of January, by your servant Robert Drury, containing in one part such advertisement as we find by effect *over-true*, albeit the success has not altogether been such as the authors of that mischievous fact had preconceived in their mind, and had put it in execution, if God in his mercy had not preserved us, and reserved us, as we trust, to the end that we may take a rigorous vengeance of that mischievous deed, which, or it should remain unpunished, we had rather lose life and all. The matter is horrible, and so strange as we believe the like was never heard of in any country. This night past, being the 9th February, a little after two hours after midnight, the house wherein the King was lodged was in one instant blown in the air, he lying sleeping in his bed, with sic a vehemency that of the whole lodging, walls, and other, there is nothing remaining, no, not a stone above another, but all carried far away, or dung in dross to the very ground stone. It must be done by force of powder, and appears to have been a mine. By whom done, or in what manner, appears not as yet. We doubt not but, according to the diligence our Council has begun to use, the certainty of all shall be *visit* (seen) shortly, which we wot God will never suffer to lie hid. We hope to punish the same with such rigour as shall serve for example of this cruelty to all ages to come. Always, whoever have taken this wicked enterprise in hand

[1] Labanoff, vol. xi. p. 3.

we assure ourself it was *dressit* as well for us as for the King, for we lay the most part of all the last week in that same lodging, and was there, accompanied with the most part of the lords that are in this town, that same night, at midnight, and of very chance tarried not all night by reason of some mask in the Abbaye; but we believe it was not chance, but God that put it in our head. We despatch this bearer upon the sudden, and therefore write to you the more shortly. The rest of your letter we shall answer at more leisure, within four or five days, by your own servant; and so for the present commit you to Almighty God.

"At Edinburgh, the 11th day of Februar, 1566-7.

"MARIE R."

This letter is only signed, not, as generally supposed, written by Mary, who was incapable of entering into the details of the frightful occurrence. Yet the remark "that the object of the assassins was to destroy her at the same time with her husband, from which peril, not chance, but the will of God, had preserved her," would naturally be dictated by her. The letter as a whole, though bearing too strongly on the subject of her husband's death to be omitted, is obviously from the same pen as the official announcement of that event to the Queen-mother of France. In her next communication to Archbishop Beton a few days later, but still through a secretary, she apologises for not replying to some matters requiring immediate notice when she wrote before, "being so tormented and grieved by the sudden mischief that had befallen the King her husband, that she could not give them her attention." And again, but as if unconscious of having already noticed his warning, she says: "We thank you heartily for your advertisement made to us of what the ambassador of Spain showed you, also of your communication with the Queen-mother toward our estate. But, alas! your message came too late, and there was over-good cause to have given us such warning, the like whereof we received of the Spanish ambassador resident in England. But even the very morning before your servant arrived was the horrible and treasonable act execute in the King's person, that may well appear to have been conspired against ourself, the circumstance of the matter being considered."[1] The reality of Mary's convic-

[1] Prince Labanoff, Recueil des Lettres de Marie Stuart, vol. xi. pp. 8-9.

tion of her own danger from the assassins of her husband is evidenced by her retiring from Holyrood Abbey, where she did not consider herself safe from a surprise, and taking refuge with her infant son in Edinburgh Castle, as many a widowed Scottish Queen had done before in time of grief and peril. A state *Dule*-chamber was fitted up there, hung with black, and arranged according to the custom of the Queens of France on such occasions. The entries in her Compotus show that sixty-three pounds sixteen shillings were disbursed by her treasurer for seventeen yards of Florence tapestry of fine French black, to be *dule* to her Grace's bed—besides twenty-four shillings for twelve ells of black ribbons and four yards of black buckram. Her board-cloth was black, and her chairs and stools were covered with black *stamying*,[1] and trimmed with black fringe, and two *caroches* [coaches] were also covered with black, at an expense of fifty pounds ten shillings.[2] The following particulars of the widow's weeds worn by Mary for Darnley are derived from the same source:—

"Item, the said day [Feb. 15], by the Queenis Grace precept, to Maister John Balfour, to be her Grace *dule* [mourning], x elnis ij quarteris of serge of Florence, to be ane goune cloak, *mulis*, and *schone* [shoes], Lxiij. &

"Item, xvij elnis ij quarteris of chamlot of silk, to be ane wilicote[3] and ane *wasquyne* [Basquinas].

"Item, iiij elnis of [armossin] to the bodies and slevis, the eln xl š *smá*, viij £.; v double elnis of blak plading; v elnis of traily bukrame, xviij elnis of *cammeraye* [cambric], to be *curschais* [coverchiefs]; x elnis of small *holane* [Holland] claith, to be curschais, the elne xxv š, xij £ xš."

On the evening of the 15th of February, the remains of the unfortunate Darnley were interred in the royal vault of the Chapel of Holyrood, by the side of the late King his uncle, Mary's father, James V.[4] The funeral was necessarily private, because performed according to the pro-

[1] The cloth now called tamine or taminy.

[2] Royal Record Office, Register House, Edinburgh.

[3] The wylicot, a primitive sort of garment still worn by children in the northern Highlands, where it answers the purpose of a gown and cloak too, being a large circular piece, in which a round aperture is cut to admit the head and shoulders: when worn as a cloak, it is drawn up round the throat; when as a petticoat, slipped down to the girdle.

[4] Keith; Lesley; Chalmers.

scribed rites of the Church of Rome, with which he died in communion. In the excited state of public feeling, it was expedient to avoid anything like pomp or display, which might have served as an excuse for bringing a concourse of people together, at the risk of raising a tumult, and causing indecorous scenes. The time was therefore prudently chosen, after the Abbey gates were closed for the night, to avert the danger of the solemnity being interrupted, and his remains insulted by fanatics, who had so often broken into the Chapel-Royal while the Queen was engaged in the offices of her religion, and beaten and driven the assistant priests from the altar. The Lord of Traquair, Darnley's kinsman, Sir John Bellenden the Justice-Clerk, with other officers of state, were present, and James Stuart of Ochiltree, the captain of the guards.[1] The next day the household of the defunct was broken up. The Queen graciously promised her favour to any of her late husband's servants who might feel disposed to enter her service. His Groom of the Chamber, Alexander Durham, having been many years in the royal household, accepted her offer; but the rest, being Englishmen, preferred returning to their own country. This, if Mary had been conscious of any deviation from her conjugal duty to their late lord, she would scarcely have permitted them to do. But, so far from opposing their desire, she afforded every facility in her power for speeding them on their way, by writing to the English authorities at Berwick to allow them free passage. Sir William Standen, Darnley's Master of the Horse, had the state charger of that unfortunate Prince, with other perquisites of his office. Anthony Standen, the courageous English page, to whose gallant interposition, in parrying the regicidal dagger of Patrick Bellenden[2] Mary had been indebted for the preservation of her life, having seen enough of the signs of the times to feel assured that he would be marked for vengeance by her foes, chose to return to England. Mary testified the grateful interest she took in his

[1] Keith; Lesley; Chalmers.

[2] Capitoline MS. at the Vatican, courteously communicated by Prince Massimo.

welfare, by writing to Sir Robert Melville, her ambassador at the Court of Elizabeth, charging that minister[1] "to protect Anthony Standen from the malice of his evil-willers, in case they attempted anything to his hurt, and to spare neither labour nor diligence whereby he might be able to do him a pleasure, which she would regard as good service performed to herself."[2]

Two days before the assassination of Darnley, Lethington had written in the Queen's name to Drury, to repeat her oft-reiterated demand that Joseph Lutini might be returned to her. Drury having been unable to extract any information of the slightest moment from Lutini, as he tells Cecil, or to convert him either into a calumniator or a spy against his royal mistress, thought proper to send him back to Edinburgh at this time of terror and excitement, when all her foreign servants were marked men, and in danger of being tortured and put to death, under the pretext of having been accessaries in Darnley's murder. As Joseph Riccio's letter, explaining the matter about which he was sent for, had been intercepted, Lutini, having the fate of David Riccio fresh in his remembrance, and doubtless combining the tragedy of Kirk-of-Field with the recent return of the outlawed assassins, protested in great alarm, "that, if he were sent back to Edinburgh, he despaired of any better speed than a prepared death."[3] Drury, however, sent him thither, under the charge of a lieutenant of the garrison of Berwick; and the Queen, being unable to see any one at that time, deputed Bothwell to investigate the matter; when, Joseph Riccio's tricks being discovered, her sense of justice led her to send Lutini a present of thirty crowns, to compensate in some degree for the trouble and uneasiness he had suffered.[4] She also offered to take him into her service again, which he prudently

[1] Melville Papers, in the archives of the Earl of Leven.

[2] Anthony Standen, and the other members of Darnley's household, were arrested at Berwick by Sir William Drury, and detained there four months, for the purpose of tampering with them to become witnesses against the royal widow.—Border Correspondence.

[3] Border Correspondence—State Paper Office MS., February 7 and 19, 1566-7.

[4] Ibid.

declined; and having satisfied his tailor, departed without further delay. His sojourn at Berwick had perhaps taught him what the faithful servants of the Queen of Scots had to expect from the assassins of her husband. The disgrace and dismissal of Joseph Riccio from the Queen's service—the natural sequence of the discovery of his knavish conduct—inducing him to leave Scotland precipitately, writers who have not taken the trouble of tracing out the curious chain of petty intrigues which had made the Palace of Holyrood too hot to hold him, have cited his absconding at this particular juncture as a strong presumption of his being an accomplice in Darnley's murder. But this is only one among the numerous instances of the fallacies attending circumstantial evidence.

The morning after Darnley's funeral, the following placard was found on the door of the Tolbooth, having been privily set up in the night: "Because proclamation is made, whosoever will reveal the murder of the King shall have two thousand pounds, I, who have made inquisition by them that were the doers thereof, affirm that the committers of it were the Earl of Bothwell, Mr James Balfour, parson of Fliske, Mr David Chalmers,[1] black Mr John Spens, who was the principal deviser of the murder,

[1] The learned legalist, David Chambers, or Chalmers, of Ormond, Chancellor of Ross, the first who digested the laws of Scotland into order, which he did by command of Queen Mary, who made him a Lord of Session in 1566. Chambers adhered to his unfortunate Queen with exemplary fidelity; and when all order was reversed and anarchy triumphant, he retired to France, to mourn the fate he could not avert. In her deepest misfortunes and most rigorous imprisonment, he continued to dedicate his learned works to her, and to defend her. Among his other occupations in exile, he wrote a work in reply to Knox's Monstrous Regiment of Women, in which the following quaint compliment to female royalty appears: "Yea, not only every nation has had female governors, but there have been some nations governed only by women. In ancient times, the sole government of Bactria was by women; and Strabo tells us 'the Tenesians and Sabrites would only be governed by women.' The Bohemians for a long time were very prudently governed by a succession of queens. The kingdom of Panidea, in the East Indies, was ruled by women. The Troglodytes, in Africa, were governed by a queen; but as these good people were a hole-and-corner kingdom, the memoirs of their queens have not come to light. There was a law amongst the Lydians and Numidians, and a most just law it was, that the women should command within doors, and the men without. Lycurgus, in his laws to the Lacedemonians, orders the men to provide for their families, and the women to govern them. Then

and the Queen assenting thereto, through the persuasion of the Earl of Bothwell, and the witchcraft of the Lady Buccleuch."[1]

The Queen's courageous answer to this anonymous denunciation was a proclamation, "requiring the setter-up of the libel to come forward and avow the same, and he should have the sum promised in her first proclamation, and further, according to his ability to make good his words before her and her Council." The royal summons was mocked by the appearance of a second placard on the door of the Tolbooth, the next morning, thus strangely worded:—

"Forasmekle as proclamation has been made, since the setting up of my first letter, desiring me to subscribe and avow the same, I desire the money to be consigned into an *evinly* [impartial] man's hand, and I shall compear on Sunday next with *foursum* [a party of four] with me, and subscribe my first letter, and abide thereat; and farther, I desire that Seignour Francis Bastian, and Joseph the Queen's goldsmith, be stayed, and I shall declare what every man did in particular, with their complices."[2]

The Queen condescended not to take further notice of these malign pasquinades, which, from their absurdity, must have appeared to her to have proceeded from some person of disordered intellect, and could scarcely have failed to recall to her mind the denunciation of the Earl of Bothwell's treasonable designs against herself by the lunatic Earl of Arran, five years before. Another of the placards, as if from one of the principals in the murder, ran thus:—

"Whereas the 12th of this present there was cried, that 'whosoever would disclose who were the slayers of the King he should have two thousand pounds and a good living,' I

some learned Greek," continues our Scottish Blackstone, "tells us of an antique people called the Bunoi, where the women are governed by their queen, and the men by their king."—David Chambers, Legitime Succession des Femmes; à Paris, 1579. Very comic incidents doubtless occurred from the last subdivision of regal labour.

[1] This lady, whom Sir Walter Scott made the heroine of the Lay of the Last Minstrel, was Janet Beton, sister to Lady Reres, and niece to Cardinal Beton. Both sisters were the objects of political slander, the charges against them being grossly improbable. [2] Anderson's Collections.

and the L. Bodewell, Mr Jembes Bafourde, Mr Davyd Chambers, and black Mr John Spence, were the doers of the same. If this be not true, ask Mr Gylbard Baforde."[1] The denunciations were not confined to these mysterious handwritings on the walls of the public buildings and churches of Edinburgh; the quiet of the night was disturbed by voices, as it had been before the battle of Flodden, predicting vengeance and woe, and accusing by name the parties on whom it was intended to fix the stigma of the assassination of the unfortunate Darnley. "No one," as Chalmers shrewdly observes, "cared for him during his life; and had his death occurred under any other circumstances than those which had been purposely arranged by the enemies of both to throw suspicion on the Queen, it would have been regarded by the people in general as a national deliverance, and hailed with savage exultation by the parties who were banded together for his murder, even before his marriage with their Sovereign." Randolph, whose hand had been with them in their secret councils, had predicted "that this new master would have brief days in Scotland."[2] His words had been literally verified. Darnley had only completed his twentieth year in the December preceding his death, and scarcely two years had elapsed since his first arrival in Scotland. Nature had endowed him with a complexion so fine, and a line of features so perfect, that but for his towering height, the haughty carriage of his head, and a scornful curl of the lip and nostril, his beauty would have been of too delicate a character. Melville, when he saw him first at the Court of Queen Elizabeth, described him "as beardless and lady-faced;" but as he was then only in his eighteenth year, his countenance had not attained the dignity of early manhood. When he arrived in Scotland he was but a precocious stripling, deeply versed in classic learning, a proficient on the lute, singing well, and capable of penning a sonnet to his lady's eyebrow; excellent at dancing a galliard, unri-

[1] Gilbert Balfour, the person indicated, was a brother of Sir James and Mr Robert Balfour, and in Bothwell's service.

[2] State Paper Office MS., Letter from Drury to Cecil.

valled in riding at the ring, pre-eminent in games of strength or skill, but deficient in the royal science of governing himself or others. Proud, passionate, selfish, and presumptuous, he had considered it highly derogatory to his marital dignity that the executive power of the realm, whereof he had become titularly a joint Sovereign, should be directed by the Queen rather than himself; not considering that it was her birthright to reign, her office being held of God and her people—his title of her favour alone, despotically and therefore illegally conferred, without the consent of the Three Estates of Scotland. Thus his misfortunes proceeded from his overweening notions of his own importance, and not understanding rightly his position in that realm. Jealous, too, of every mark of homage or token of regard bestowed on his consort in which he was not punctiliously included, he betrayed as ungallant a spirit of conjugal envy as the Otaheitan chief Tao-tu-ha exhibited, when Captain Wallis presented his august spouse Queen Oberrea with a doll apparelled like an English lady, because he was not complimented with the like offering. On such paltry grounds will matrimonial differences sometimes arise, especially where the natural order of things is reversed, by the superiority in wealth and rank being on the female side, as was the case with Mary Stuart. She was, besides, four years older than Darnley—a circumstance by no means favourable to any lady whose husband has no arrived at the age of discretion. The family motto of this unfortunate Prince, "AVANT DARNLE—DARRIERE JAMAIS!" having been impressed on his mind from infancy, had flattered him with the notion that his will, if obstinately persisted in, was to carry everything before it. But as he possessed not the qualifications which lead to such results —firmness of purpose, founded on reason, united with conciliating manners, a knowledge of the human heart, and just consideration for the rights of others—he offended every one by his presumptuous selfishness, and provoked enmities among the nobles of Scotland which nothing but his death could satisfy.

A more striking illustration of his unpopular conduct

in Scotland can scarcely be cited than the following imperious letter on the subject of game preservation, the original of which is in the charter-room of the Earl of Morton:—

"LAIRD OF LOWGHE LEVYN,—Whereas we have taken order, through our realm, for restraint of shooting with guns, you being sheriff of these parts; we will and command you hereby to apprehend all persons within your charge that so uses to shoot contrary to our order; and we having already understanding of one John Shawe, *sun* to Maister William Shaw, to be a common shooter, we also charge you hereby to take the said John, and send him to us with his gun, wherever we chance to be, within three days after this present. And farther, we being informed of divers fires used to be made upon the waters for fishing scareth the fowles, our pleasure is also that ye restrain all such fires being made till ye farther understand from us. In all which doing these signed with our hand shall be your sufficient warrant against all persons.—Given at Burley this Wendsday the 11 of November.

"HENRY R.

"To our well-beloved the Laird of Lowghe Leven."

The oft-repeated assertion that Mary never forgave Darnley for the ungrateful and treacherous part acted by him in the conspiracy for Riccio's murder can now be satisfactorily disproved, by the simple evidence of the real state of her mind towards him afforded by one of the testamentary documents executed by her in Edinburgh Castle before the birth of her son, when under the melancholy impression that she would die in childbed,[1] in consequence of the ill-treatment and agitation she had suffered on that occasion. The document in question refers only to the disposal of the jewels that were her personal property, probably those she brought from France. She has written against each of these, with her own hand, the name of the person to whom it is to be given after her death, in case her infant should not survive her; finally endorsing the memorandum with these words—"*J' entends . . c'est ainsi soyt execute au cas que l'enfant ne me survive; mays si il vit, je le foy heritier de tout.*—MARIE R."

[1] I am indebted to the courtesy and liberality of Joseph Robertson, Esq., of Her Majesty's Register House, Edinburgh, for the communication of this most interesting paper in illustration of my Life of Mary Stuart, for which my thanks are gratefully offered; as well as to the Deputy-keeper of the Royal Records, W. Pitt Dundas, Esq., for the courteous attention with which I have been treated, and the facilities that have been granted to me in the prosecution of my historical labours.

She leaves tokens of remembrance to her French kindred, to Madame de Briante her governess, to the four Maries, to her brother Moray, his wife, the Earl and Countess of Mar, to the Earls of Huntley, Bothwell, and Argyll, to her sister Lady Argyll, and to Lady Bothwell,—in short, to all the members of her Court and household, whom she, in the confiding truthfulness of a young warm heart, esteemed her faithful friends. Against each of her bequests to her husband she has written "*Au Roy.*" Among these is "a Saint Michael made of forty diamonds, a chain of diamonds and pearls, formed of twenty-four pieces each, decorated with two diamonds and twenty-four cordelieres of pearls; another of like fashion formed of eight pieces only, each set with two pearls and nine cordelieres of pearls; twelve great buttons, decorated with twelve roses of diamonds; twelve other great precious stones, ballas rubies; four hundred and four buttons of Venetian work, enamelled white, every one set with a ruby; seventy-one buttons, great, middle size, and small, every one set with a ballas ruby; twenty-seven buttons, each set with a sapphire; sixteen little *chattons* (cat's eyes), every one set with a sapphire; a watch decorated with ten diamonds, two rubies, and a cordon of gold." In this inventory, "two costly ruby chains," apparently duplicates, are described, "formed of twelve pieces, every one set with two rubies, two diamonds, and twenty-four pearls:" against these Mary has written in the margin—"*L'une au roy; et l'autre a mon neveu;*" meaning her little pet and godson, Francis Stuart, the son of her late brother, Lord John of Coldingham, and Lady Jean Hepburn, Bothwell's sister.

But the most interesting page of this document regards the disposition of her rings, which are classed under the descriptive heading, "BAGUES POUR LES DOIGHTS." In the margin, the agitated hand of the royal testatrix has written in obsolete French, now scarcely intelligible in consequence of the tears, which have apparently fallen upon it while the ink was wet, having run the words one into another—"*Souvenances pour mes ames biens amis,*"—Remembrances for my well-beloved friends. Foremost in the list of these

Mary has placed her husband—the jewel she there bequeathes to him being, as every female heart will allow, more touchingly characteristic of her lover-like feeling towards him than all the costly chains of diamonds, rubies, and pearls she had previously assigned to him as posthumous memorials of an affection which his ingratitude had failed to obliterate from her breast. The jewel thus devised to Darnley by Mary is described in the inventory as "a diamond ring enamelled red." Over against it she has written, "It is that with which I was espoused." On the other side, a little below it, she has added, "For the King, who gave it to me." This must have been the ring with which Darnley wedded Mary in the privacy of David Riccio's chamber at Stirling; for at the public solemnisation of their nuptials in the Chapel-Royal of Holyrood, three rings of surpassing richness were used. The simplicity of this red enamelled ring speaks for itself—that it was no state jewel, but a pledge of love—no less than the emphatic brevity with which the heart-broken royal wife recalls her consort's attention to all the tender recollections associated with the period when she received it from his hand, in the trustful belief of the sincerity of his affection.

She leaves to her mother-in-law, the Countess of Lennox, "a diamond fashioned like a face, and a pointed diamond set in black enamel." The forgiving gentleness of her nature is testified by her bequeathing a mourning jewel to Lennox, as well as to his lady, described as "a large pointed diamond set in black enamel." To Bothwell a table diamond set in black enamel, evidently intended for a mourning ring, also another mourning jewel called an *enseigne*, set with eleven diamonds and one ruby—trifling tokens of esteem such as any female sovereign might bequeath to a member of her cabinet. These bequests are very inferior in number and value to her legacies to Moray, Huntley, and Argyll, but deserving of particular attention as evidence that her feelings towards him were not of a warmer character than those of friendship. To Lady Bothwell, too, she allots, among other costly things, a coif decorated with rubies,

pearls, and *grenatz* [garnets]; a collar also set with rubies, pearls, and grenatz; and a pair of sleeves decorated with rubies, pearls, and grenatz.

After Mary had spent a week in the lugubrious seclusion of her *dule* chamber in Edinburgh Castle, from which the light of day had been rigorously excluded, her health and spirits became so alarmingly depressed that her Council, by the advice of her physicians, entreated her to change the air and scene without delay. She accordingly retired to Seton, which was near enough to Edinburgh to allow her to transact business of state, and at the same time to take the needful repose of the country, and the exercise to which she had been accustomed.[1] The reproaches that have been lavished upon her, for not persisting in shutting herself up forty days in her *dule* chamber, with the like ceremonials she had observed on the death of her royal consort Francis II., are unreasonable. As the widow of a King of France, she considered it obligatory on her to conform to the customs of royalty in that realm, where, indeed, she had nothing better to occupy her time than indulgence in the luxury of woe. But the case was different in regard to her second widowhood, for Darnley was only a King-consort, and she a reigning Sovereign, encumbered with the business of her realm, which could not be abandoned for a vain ceremonial. "You mocked and jested amongst yourselves," retorts Adam Blackwood, as well he might, on her censurers, "at the keeping of her closet, at her candle, at her black mourning attire; now you blame her that she took not long enough in performing those duties which you hold in conscience to be superstitions."

Queen Mary left Edinburgh for Seton Castle on Sunday, February 16, accompanied by her ladies, the Archbishop of St Andrews, and most of her nobles then in Edinburgh, having more than a hundred persons in her suite.[2] Sir William Drury writes to Cecil on the 17th, "that he has certain knowledge that the Queen will be that night at Dunbar, escorted by Huntley, Bothwell, Argyll, and a hun-

[1] Lesley, in Anderson's Coll. [2] Chalmers. Diurnal of Occurrents.

dred horsemen;"[1]—intelligence that was, like many of his communications respecting her, incorrect.

Mary gained nothing by leaving her metropolis: she changed the scene, indeed, but sorrow, care, and calumny pursued her to her retreat at Seton, and continued to harass her till she was dismissed to that refuge where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Pecuniary difficulties were among her distresses, and had been for some time before her husband's tragic fate. Previous to that event, she had been endeavouring to negotiate a small loan in France through her ambassador, Archbishop Beton; and her want of ready money to meet the various expenses that were pressing upon her, is evidenced by her begging him "to be earnestful for the assignment of the sum of forty thousand franks, for which there were purposes that could ill brook delay."[2] Her household was, however, greatly reduced after Darnley's death, not only in consequence of the departure of his servants, but a great many of her own: her foreign attendants, for the most part, warned by the fate of David and Darnley, fled the realm in terror. "This afternoon arrived here," writes the Marshal of Berwick, "recommended by the Queen's letters here to pass by post, Monsieur Dolu, treasurer of her revenues in France, and her domestic servants, with eight others in his company, all apparelled in Highland weed, saving one Scotchman. Bastian hath letters from the Queen here to the Queen's Majesty my Sovereign."[3]

Darnley had a band of his own, and a company of English musicians under his especial patronage. Hudson, the leader of these, repaired to the Queen at Seton, and required her license, as his other servants had done, that they might return to their own country. She dissuaded them to the contrary, saying unto them, "You have lost a good master; but if you will tarry, you shall find me not only a good mistress, but a mother."[4] But not even this kind and gracious assurance could prevail on them to remain in that

[1] State Paper Office MS., Border Correspondence.
[2] Labanoff—Mary Stuart to Archbishop Beton, from Seton, Feb. 18.
[3] Drury to Cecil, Feb. 19—State Paper MS.
[4] Drury to Cecil, Feb. 28.

perilous country, which had proved so fatal to David Riccio and to their unfortunate lord.[1]

The absurd story of "the Queen shooting at the butts with Bothwell against Seton and Huntley, and compelling the two latter to pay the forfeit in the shape of a dinner to her and Bothwell at Tranent," is utterly devoid of truth. It was adopted too hastily by the late lamented historian of Scotland, Patrick Fraser Tytler, Esq., from one of the budgets of unverified scandals of the Scottish Queen that were duly transmitted by Sir William Drury from Berwick to Cecil, for the amusement of Queen Elizabeth, and occurs in a letter in which he states "that he is informed, by divers means, that the Lady Bothwell is extremely sick, and not likely to live, being marvellously swollen."[2] She had only been married a year, and lived long enough to bury two husbands after her nuptial tie with Bothwell, whom she survived fifty years, was dissolved. Drury's paragraph regarding Queen Mary is about as veracious as his insinuation that Bothwell's young wife was poisoned; but it will be observed he only speaks of it as hearsay: "Even now is brought me, that the Queen came on Wednesday, at night, to the Lord Wharton's[3] house, seven miles off this side, and dined by the way at a place called Tranent, belonging to the Lord Seton, where he and Huntley paid for the dinner, the Queen and the Earl of Bothwell having, at a match of shooting, won the same of them." Drury had the candour to acknowledge, in a subsequent letter, which escaped the attention of Tytler, "that he had been misinformed in regard to the Scottish Queen's proceedings, as she had never stirred from Seton," eight miles only from Edinburgh, and where she had too many painful matters to occupy her time and attention to enter into frivolous and unseasonable amusements. But even if she can be supposed to have risked freezing her fingers by

[1] If there had been the slightest grounds of suspicion against the Queen in regard to the latter assassination more than in the first, would these men have all been silent when they reached England? How happened it that only one of Darnley's servants, Nelson, was ever brought forward to depose aught against her?

[2] Drury to Cecil—Border Correspondence, Feb. 1566-7.

[3] Probably the Laird of Wauchton is the person meant by Drury.

practising feats of archery in a Scotch February, on the bleak sea-coast, it is certain that Bothwell was not of the party; witness the following entry in the Diurnal of Occurrents: "Upon the sixteenth day of the said month of February, our Sovereign Lady past from Holyrood House to Seton, and left the Earls of Huntley and Bothwell in the Palace of Holyrood House, to keep the Prince unto her return."[1]

The fact that Mary intrusted her only child, her most precious possession on earth, to the care of Bothwell and his brother-in-law, at such a season, testifies her entire confidence in their integrity. They were among the few whom she had no apparent reason to suspect. Monsieur du Croc, who was unfortunately absent on a visit to the Court of England at the time the tragedy of Kirk-of-Field was perpetrated, returned to Scotland at this time, and joined the Queen at Seton.[2] If he had left her in a pitiable state of health and spirits after the baptism of her boy at Stirling, he found her now in circumstances far more painful. She was then the darling of her people, and the object of general sympathy on account of her conjugal infelicity; but now, in consequence of the late frightful occurrence, and the subtle proceedings of the real authors of the crime, in pointing, by means of the dissemination of anonymous papers and caricatures, the suspicion of the instigation of the deed at her, a reverse of public feeling was rapidly taking place. A placard had been set up on one of the public buildings of Edinburgh with these words, "Farewell, gentyl Henrye! but a vengeance on Mary."[3] Another appeared on the Tron, declaring that the smith who made the false keys to the King's lodging would be declared, provided the person who could give the information might be assured of the reward promised in the proclamation.

Mary has been severely censured for not taking active means for discovering the authors of these anonymous denunciations. They were, in reality, directed against herself, and the tocsin notes of the approaching revolution.

[1] P. 106. [2] Keith.
[3] Drury's Letters to Cecil—Border Correspondence, February 1566-7.

She was of all persons most deeply interested in unmasking the skulking incendiaries, who were thus inflaming the minds of the citizens against her; but, environed by traitors, what was she to do? Her brother Moray had withdrawn a few hours only before the blow was struck at Darnley, prudently removing himself out of danger of arrest, and, in spite of her reiterated messages for him to return to Edinburgh, continued to absent himself from her presence and her Council Chamber. He had exercised the functions of her Prime Minister, and been her principal adviser; or, to use the quaint language of the times, "had the whole guiding of the Queen and her realm," for the last nine months; yet he left her to carry on the government as she best might, in the first moments of her appalling bereavement. The reins of state fell, as a matter of course, into the hands of Bothwell, Huntley, and Argyll, who, in conjunction with Lethington, became from that time the ruling powers in the Court of Holyrood. It was, indeed, scarcely possible for it to be otherwise, as they were three of the greatest territorialists in Scotland. Huntley was her Lord Chancellor, to which office she had, in conjunction with her consort, preferred him after the overt treason of Morton in the preceding March; Argyll, her sister's husband, was master of a considerable portion of the Highlands, and Justice-General of the realm; Bothwell was Commander-in-Chief, both by land and sea, Lieutenant of the Borders, Sheriff of the Lothians, Captain of Dunbar, and other strongholds of the realm. The Queen, a defenceless young widow, with an empty exchequer, of a different religion from her people, abandoned by Moray, intimidated by the English faction, and unsupported by her natural ally, France, yielded to the force of circumstances, over which she had no control, and did her best to carry on her government with such a Cabinet as she could obtain. It was a Cabinet composed exclusively of Protestants; and if she had chosen to abandon her own most unpopular religion, and declare herself a Congregational Queen, her path might have been easy enough.

The calamitous fate of Darnley produced a change in her feelings towards his offending parent. True to the genuine tenderness of woman's gentle nature, she wrote to Lennox, immediately after that frightful event, a conciliatory letter of sympathy in a grief that touched them both so nearly, and invited him to return to her Court, and assist her with his counsel in taking proper measures for the detection and punishment of the authors of the crime; promising, at the same time, "to treat him with the like affection she had shown him on his first arrival in Scotland."[1] This letter she despatched by a special messenger to her father-in-law at Glasgow, earnestly craving a reply. Lennox said "he would consider about it;" but, after detaining her messenger all night, he dismissed him with the observation, "Her Majesty's letter requires no answer."[2] In the course of a few days, however, he changed his mind, and wrote to her; but neither that letter nor her response can be found. The tenor of both, however, as well as that previously written by Mary, may be gathered from the following letter from Lennox to her, which, although always described as the commencement of the correspondence, was in reality the fourth that had passed between him and his royal daughter-in-law. The fact that the correspondence was opened by her, immediately after Darnley's murder, in an affectionate tone in the first instance, that her advances were repelled by Lennox, and that he afterwards took it up in anything but a friendly spirit, gives a very different reading to it.

LETTER FROM THE EARL OF LENNOX TO QUEEN MARY, 20TH OF FEBRUARY 1566-7.

"Pleasit your Majesty, I have received by this bearer, my servant, your most gracious and comfortable letter, for which I render your Majesty most humble thanks, and trusts never to deserve otherwise at your Majesty's

[1] Even by Morny's journal the fact is certified, that the Queen wrote to the Earl of Lennox as early as the 11th of February, promising to cause the murderers of her husband, as soon as they should be discovered, to be tried for that crime. Her letter, which Lennox might have produced, but, for reasons best known to himself, did not, he acknowledged to have been "gracious and comfortable."

[2] Drury to Cecil, February 19—Border Correspondence.

hands than as your Highness appears in your said letter; and seeing that it pleases your Majesty to accept and take in good part my simple advice and counsel, it boldens me the more to continue therein, and specially in this following: That whereas, notwithstanding the travail and labour which I perceive your Majesty takes for the just trial of this late cruel act, and yet the offenders not being known, to my great grief, I am therefore forced, by nature and duty, to be so bold as to give your Majesty my poor and simple advice for bringing the matter to light; which is, to beseech your Majesty most humbly, for God's cause and the honour of your Majesty and this your realm, that your Highness would, with convenient diligence, assemble the whole nobility and Estates of your Majesty's realm, and that by your advice, to take such good order for the perfect trial of the matter, as I doubt not, with the grace of Almighty God, his Holy Spirit shall so work upon the hearts of your Majesty and all your faithful subjects, as the bloody and cruel actors of this deed shall be manifestly known. And although I need not put your Majesty in remembrance thereof, the matter touching your Majesty so near as it does, yet I shall humbly desire your Majesty to bear with me in troubling your Highness therein, being the father to him that is gone.

"So commits your Majesty to the protection of Almighty God, who preserve you with long life and most happy reign.

"From —— [Houston], the xx. day of Februar."[1]

Deeply wounded, apparently, at the stiffness with which her father-in-law had replied to her "gracious and comfortable letter," Mary assumed the style regal in her answer:—

QUEEN MARY TO THE EARL OF LENNOX.

"Right trust cousin and counsellor, we greet you well. We have received your letter from Houston, the xx. day of this instant, giving us thanks for the accepting of your goodwill and counsel in so good part. In that we did what was right, and in showing you all the pleasure and goodwill that we can, we do but our duty, and that which natural affection maun compel us to. Always of that ye may assure yourself as certainly at this present and hereafter, so long as God gives us life, as ever you might have done since our first acquaintance with you. And for the assembly of the nobility and Estates which ye advise us cause be convened, for a perfect trial to be had of the King our husband's cruel slaughter, it is indeed convenient that so should be; and even before the receipt of your letter, we had caused proclaim a Parliament, at the which we doubt not but they all, for the most part, shall be present, where, first of all, this matter, being most dear to us, shall be handled, and nothing left undone which may further the clear trial of the odious fact; and we, for our own part, as we ought, and all noblemen likewise, we doubt not, shall most willingly direct all our wits and *ingines* [ingenuity] to this end, as experience, in fine, with God's

[1] Keith.

grace, shall give witnessing to the world. And so we commit you to God. At Seton, the xxii. of Februar 1566-7.

"Your *gud*-daughter,[1]

"MARIE R."

At the end of five days, Lennox wrote again to Mary, objecting to delay the investigation till the meeting of the Parliament; observing, "that it was not a parliamentary matter, but of such weight that it ought immediately to be pursued with all diligence and expedition," urging her "to put in sure keeping the persons named in the tickets, that had appeared on the Tolbooth door and other places in Edinburgh, on their trials; and also to require, by open proclamation, the writers of the said tickets to appear and declare their knowledge."[2] The latter requisition Mary had anticipated by her second proclamation, without producing any effect. In regard to the first, the matter was attended with some embarrassment, as both herself and Lady Buccleuch had been named as accessaries to the crime, with the absurd declaration "that she had been bewitched into consenting to the murder of her husband." Mary could not have forgotten that, about eighteen months before,[3] the political libellers, suborned by the English faction, had reported that she had been bewitched into love for Darnley by the witchcraft of his mother, Lady Lennox, although that princely lady was nearly four hundred miles off.[4] Aware that there was no more truth in the one report than the other, she must naturally have attributed both to the same malignant author, and paid very little regard to denunciations emanating from a source so unworthy of credit. Conscious of her own integrity, Mary might have reasoned thus within herself: "A false accusation is brought against me and several of my servants by some skulking foe, who aims poisoned arrows at us in the dark. Why, being innocent

[1] Scotch for daughter-in-law. This letter is printed in Keith, and in Labanoff, vol. ii.

[2] Letter of the Earl of Lennox to Queen Mary, from Houston, Feb. 26, 1566-7—printed in Keith and in Anderson.

[3] See vol. iii. Lives of the Queens of Scotland, p. 134.

[4] Innocens de Marie Stuart—Jebb's Collections; De Foix's Despatches.

myself, should I believe there is any reality in the guilt he imputes to them?" Willing, however, to satisfy Lennox, if that were possible, she wrote:—

"Ye have partly mistaken our late letter, that we should remit the trial of the odious act committed to the time of a Parliament; we meant not that, but would rather wish to God that it might be suddenly and without delay tried, for ay the sooner the better, and the greater comfort for us. Yet because your advice was, 'that we should convene our whole nobility for that purpose,' we answered you 'that we had already proclaimed a Parliament, at the which they would convene, and before which we judged it should not be able to get them together, since they would think double convening heavy to them.' And so, in mention-making of a Parliament, we meant not that this trial was a Parliament matter, nor that it was requirit till then to defer it, but that then the nobility would be best convened. And whereas ye desire 'that we should cause the names, contained in some tickets affixed on the Tolbooth door of Edinburgh, to be put in sure keeping,' there is so many of the said tickets, and therewithal so different and contrarious to others, in counting the names, that we wot not on what ticket to proceed. But if there be any names mentioned in them that ye think worthy to suffer a trial, upon your advertisement we shall proceed to the cognition-taking as may stand with the laws of this realm, and being found guilty, shall see the punishment as rigorously executed as the weight of the crime deserves. What other thing ye think meet to be done to that purpose, we pray you let us understand, and we shall not omit any occasion which may clear the matter; and so fare ye well. At Seton, the 1st of March 1566-7.

"Your *gud*-daughter,

"MARIE R."[1]

Lennox took no less than sixteen days for consideration before he answered this letter, and named the parties whose prosecution he required. Meantime the incendiary placard system was diligently followed up, but, omitting all meaner names, pointed directly at the Queen and Bothwell. A bill, with the regal initials M. R. very large, and a hand with a sword in it, was one night posted up; and near this the letters L. B., for Lord Bothwell, with a mallet above, excited public attention. The midnight cries, appealing for vengeance on the shedders of innocent blood, with a proclamation of the names of the alleged assassins, continued. Several persons undertook to watch and capture the nocturnal agitator; but he either eluded their vigilance, or was

[1] Printed in Keith, p. 371-2, and in Labanoff.

found to be too strongly accompanied by armed men to be safely attacked.[1]

These base contrivances, for exciting the passions and prejudices of the multitude against the Queen, beginning to produce visible effects, a junta of the most crafty members of the conspirators, Moray, Morton, and their adherents, met secretly at Dunkeld Castle, the house of Lennox's kinsman, the Earl of Atholl, with Lindsay of the Byres, and others, to concert measures for a revolutionary movement, under the pretext of avenging the death of their Sovereign's husband;[2] yet there was not one among them who had not previously been banded against his life.[3]

Important light is thrown both on the proceedings of the conspirators and the state of the contending parties in Scotland at this interesting period, by a letter from the Bishop of Mondivi to Cosmo I., Duke of Tuscany,[4] communicating the information on that subject, which, he says, "had just been reported to him by the Savoyard ambassador and Father Edmonds, they having succeeded, during their late mission to the Court of Holyrood, in penetrating Moray's designs, and the secret league that had been formed thus early after Darnley's death, between the Earl of Lennox and him, against Queen Mary." The writer of this letter had been appointed by the Pope as his nuncio in Scotland; but in consequence of Mary's reluctance to receive him, had proceeded no further than Paris, and appears, in consequence, much dissatisfied with her. After mentioning with unfeigned concern the injury the papal cause was likely to receive by the assassination of Mary's consort, he proceeds in these words, "the Earls of Moray, Morton, and Atholl have formed a league with the Earl of Lennox, father to him that was King, under pretext of revenging the death of the said King. The Earls of Bothwell, of Huntley, and many other great lords, rank themselves near the Queen for the same purpose; but one party looks with suspicion on the

[1] Drury to Cecil—Border Correspondence; Tytler.
[2] Drury to Cecil, February 28—Border Correspondence.
[3] See Archibald Douglas's letter to Queen Mary, in Robertson's Appendix.
[4] Preserved in the Archives di Medicis at Florence. Printed in the original Italian, by Prince Labanoff.

other. The Earl of Moray, being sent for by her Majesty, would not come; from whence it may be judged, as written to you on the 12th of this present, that, having views on the realm, he will avail himself of this opportunity to slay the Earl of Bothwell—a man of valour, in much credit and confidence with the Queen—with intent to attack insidiously the life of her Majesty. And, above all, he hopes, by this junction with the Earl of Lennox, to have, by his permission and consent, the government of the Prince, and consequently of the whole kingdom—the which thing if he obtains (but may God not permit it), all will follow as the villain has proposed to himself. Nor will he fail of the favour of the Queen of England, who, from the jealousy she has of the said Princess, as legitimate heir of both kingdoms, will not cease to favour the said Moray her dependent, and join in compelling every one in religion. Added to this is the little trustworthiness of the Lord Erskine, his mother's brother, who, when he had custody of two of the principal fortresses in Scotland—to wit, the castles of Edinburgh and Stirling—at the instances of the English betrayed the mother of this Queen, so now would desert her Majesty herself for the interest of his nephew; and it may be greatly suspected that the Queen will be tempted to supersede him from the said two fortresses, giving them in custody to the Earl of Bothwell. The Confederate Lords," pursues the nuncio, "are all heretics, with the exception of the Earl of Lennox (Darnley's father) and the Earl of Atholl, who hitherto have shown themselves so lukewarm in practice of their religion, that they have always publicly compromised it to their particular interests." The next paragraph is of the utmost importance, as it contains indisputable evidence that Mary never did sign the League, of which she has been ignorantly asserted to have been a member. "And if the Queen would have done that which was counselled and proposed by the *banda* (league, I should say), by which, with promise of all the aid that might be necessary to its just execution, she would have found herself now complete mistress of her kingdom, with authority enabling her to restore entirely the holy

Catholic faith. But never had she the will to listen to it. Nevertheless, there has been sent to her Majesty Monsignore Domblanen and the Padre Emondo to persuade her to embrace this wisest undertaking. Please God that such lawless impunity bring not on her Majesty and this poor kingdom total ruin!"[1]

Mondivi also states "that Mary, some time before her husband's assassination, held a secret Council with the nobles of her own Church, to consider the propriety of sending Lord Seton, with a convoy of three ships, to bring the nuncio into Scotland, and the prelates offered to defray all expenses of the voyage; but that she, though strongly urged by them to render that service to her Church, had nevertheless hesitated and temporised till the favourable opportunity was lost for ever." Her excuse was, "that she could not by any means answer for the safety of the nuncio's person, from the violence of the Congregationalists," whom he, the nuncio-depute, of course styles "*Heretici.*"[2] "But these," continues he, "being reduced to the number I informed your Highness on a separate paper in my letter of August 21, it would have been easy for the Queen to coerce them if she had been willing. Thus, had her Majesty," he adds, with increasing bitterness against Mary, "done her duty to our Lord, and without fear accepted the nuncial visit, there might have been sure hope of speedily restoring the holy Catholic religion; whereas now the death of the King has thrown the whole island into confusion and perplexity, as well as the Queen."[3]

From the tenor of this confidential letter, it is plain that very formidable intrigues for the suppression of the Protestant worship in Scotland had been secretly going on for the last few months, which the prudence of the Queen, and her conscientious regard to her promise not to attempt anything against the parliamentary religion established in her realm, had neutralised. Hence the complaints of her bigoted inconsiderate consort to the Pope and Romish powers

[1] Preserved in the Archives di Medicis at Florence. Printed in the original Italian, by Prince Labanoff. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

and principalities of Europe, of "her lukewarmness in the cause of the Church"[1]—one source of their dissensions in the preceding autumn. The Pope's pecuniary offerings to him intimate that his influence was considered of importance; the lamentations of the nuncio for his death prove that it was regarded as a mortal blow to the cause of Romanism in Great Britain—circumstances which, while they must, to every rational person, exonerate the Queen from the slightest complicity in his cutting off, afford full presumption that a dreadful religious war, both in Scotland and England, was averted by that event. The scruples of many of the more conscientious members of the confederacy, to which he fell a victim in the early flower of his days, were probably removed by that consideration. It was an epoch of strong excitement, and much wickedness was committed on both sides, for which good motives were pleaded.

Queen Mary returned from Seton to her metropolis on the 7th of March with her Court. The following day she gave audience to Killigrew, the English ambassador, in her *dule* chamber in Edinburgh Castle, to receive the letters and condolences with which he was charged by Queen Elizabeth. "I found the Queen's Majesty," he says, "in a dark chamber, so as I could not see her face; but by her words she seemed very doleful, and did accept my Sovereign's letters and message in very thankful manner, as will, I trust, appear by her answer, which I hope to receive within these two days, and I think will tend to satisfy the Queen's Majesty as much as this present can permit, not only for the matters of Ireland, but also the treaty of Leith." The following extract may serve as a sample of "the precious balm" Queen Elizabeth thought proper to pour on the head of her unfortunate kinswoman, under the name of a letter of condolence:—

"MADAM,—My ears have been so much shocked, my mind distressed, and my heart appalled, at hearing the horrible report of the abominable murder of your husband, my slaughtered cousin, that I have scarcely as

[1] Knox, Hist. Ref. Scot.

yet spirits to write about it; but although nature constrains me to lament his death, so near to me in blood as he was, I must tell you boldly that I am far more concerned for you than I am for him. Oh, madam! I should neither perform the office of a faithful cousin nor that of an affectionate friend, if I studied rather to please your ears than to preserve your honour: therefore I will not conceal from you that people, for the most part, say 'that you will look through your fingers at this deed, instead of revenging it, and that you have not cared to touch those who have done you this pleasure, as if the deed had not been without the murderers having had that assurance.' Of me think, I beseech you, that I would not have such a thought in my heart for all the gold in the world. I would never allow so evil a guest to lodge in my breast, as to have so bad an opinion of any Prince whatsoever, much less of one to whom I wish all the good that my heart can imagine, or yours could desire." [1]

The grimace of friendship under which the rival British Queen condescended to mask the vindictive malice which had prompted her to address these studied insults to the royal widow, must have been most revolting to the high spirit of that unfortunate Princess. The letter she wrote in reply has been carefully suppressed. It probably repelled the injurious aspersions with which Elizabeth had taunted her, as emanating from the secret-service-men of England, and retaliated them with home truths, reminding her of her uniform hostility to him whom she now affected to lament, her encouragement to those who had sought his life, her cruel persecution of his unoffending mother, and her incivility in refusing to acknowledge his regal title as King-consort of Scotland, and which she still continued to deny him, even after his death; and, above all, the reason there was to attribute that crime to the assassins of David Riccio, Darnley's sworn foes, who had found favourable entertainment in England, and been pardoned, and recalled in evil hour to Scotland, in consequence of her persevering importunities in their behalf. It must not, however, be forgotten, that Elizabeth, in her characteristic letter of condolence to poor Mary, exhorts her "so to take the matter to heart as not to fear touching the nearest relation she had, and not to allow any consideration to prevent her from giving proof to the world that she was a

[1] Labanoff.

noble Princess and a loyal wife." But to whom did this hint apply but to the Earl of Moray? whom Mary had always recognised as her brother, and loved and confided in with an infatuation which had afforded reasonable cause for complaint to her husband, against whose life he had plotted. Under these circumstances, Moray was the natural object of suspicion,—and great suspicion, doubtless, did apply to him; but he prudently kept at a safe distance from the Court till he had taken his defensive measures for dethroning his royal sister, by forming a secret league with Atholl and Lennox, under the pretext of avenging the death of her husband, the object of his deadliest hatred. Encouraged by the arrival of his English friends, Moray now returned to Edinburgh, after nearly a month's absence, and resumed his long-vacant place at the Council-board. Notwithstanding his secret pact for the prosecution of the murderers of Darnley, of whom Bothwell was daily placarded as the principal, he gave the right hand of fellowship to him, and invited him, in company with his accomplices Lethington, Huntley, and Argyll, to a select diplomatic dinner, to meet the English ambassador Killigrew, on the 8th of March,[1] and for a full month from that time continued to treat him with all outward demonstrations of friendship, conformably to the band they had entered into in the preceding October to maintain and stand by each other in all their doings. "I see no troubles at present," writes Killigrew, "nor appearance thereof, but a general misliking among the commons and some others of the detestable murder of their King—a shame, as they suppose, to the whole nation. The preachers say, and pray openly to God, 'that it will please Him both to reveal and revenge it,' exhorting all men to prayer and repentance."[2] In a preceding passage of the same letter he observes, and this remark evidently applies to Bothwell, "I find great suspicions, and no proof."

Mary, in accordance with her right royal spirit of muni-

[1] Killigrew to Cecil—State Paper Office MS. [2] State Paper Office MS.

ficence, guerdoned the English envoy, at his departure, with the present of a rich chain.[1] Her will was, however, larger than her means; and it was with extreme difficulty she contrived to supply her goldsmith with the gold of which it was fashioned.

[1] Killigrew's next visit to Scotland was during Mary's captivity in England, when he was sent thither as the accredited agent of Elizabeth and Cecil, to arrange the infamous treaty with Mar and Morton for delivering her up to them, with the express condition "that she should be tried and executed within six hours after her arrival in Scotland." Such being the nature of the leagues formed between the English Government and the Scottish conspirators, due caution is requisite in admitting the reports of either against Mary, unless verified by substantial proofs.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXXII.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary confides her son to the care of the Earl of Mar—Sends the royal babe to Stirling Castle—Her maternal care for his comforts—Lennox renews his correspondence with her, having first written to Queen Elizabeth—He requires Mary to prosecute Bothwell, and the others denounced in the placards—Queen accedes to his request—Mary attends the mass for her husband's soul, and the midnight dirge—Her broken health and profound melancholy—She is suspected of her husband's murder—Political caricatures and libels disseminated—Her distress—Bothwell demands a trial—Moray quits Scotland—His treacherous conduct—Queen Mary required by Lennox and Queen Elizabeth to postpone Bothwell's trial—Impossibility of doing so—Contemptuous treatment of Queen Elizabeth's messenger by Lethington and Bothwell—Archbishop Beton's letter—Alarming hint from the Spanish ambassador of some treasonable enterprise against Queen Mary—Bothwell's trial and acquittal—He sets up a cartel offering to maintain his innocence by single combat—Lennox asks leave of the Queen to quit Scotland—She grants his request.—Contemporary English ballad on the death of Darnley.

QUEEN MARY remained in Edinburgh Castle from the 7th till the 9th of March, on which day she returned to her retreat at Seton with her Court.[1] Her attention was at this time occupied in providing a protector and secure asylum for her infant son. The person on whom her choice naturally fell was the Earl of Mar, her former preceptor, and the son of one of her own trusty lord-keepers, the late Lord Erskine, who had guarded her, in her orphaned infancy and helpless childhood, alike from the attempts of her cruel uncle of England and his secret-service-men among her

[1] Chalmers.

peers. The sons of Mary's lord-keepers, with the glorious exception of Lord Livingstone, were, unfortunately for her, men of different mettle from their sires. But, incapable of baseness herself, her generous nature forbade her to suspect treachery in those whom the ties of friendship and gratitude for benefits received, as well as loyalty and honour, ought to have bound indissolubly to her service. The Countess of Mar, whom she had already appointed governess or lady-mistress to the Prince, was her confidential friend; the Earl she had been accustomed to love and obey with filial reverence from her earliest remembrance; nor had his change of creed, and transformation from an ecclesiastic in the Church of Rome to a lay peer of Parliament and a married man, in aught abated her regard for him. She had permitted him to forsake the stole for the ermine, the cross for the sword—assisted in belting him an earl, and placed a coronet with her own hand on his shaven head, not making her opinion a rule for his in modes of faith, but allowing him that freedom of conscience she claimed for herself. It was to this nobleman, then a professed Protestant, that Mary Stuart confided the care and tuition of her only child, till he should attain the age of seventeen years. She must have been fully aware, when she did this, that her boy would be bred up in the principles of the Reformation, and the fact is indicative of the enlightened views she had formed on the subject. It was desirable that the Sovereign should be of the national religion; she had felt the evils of having been educated in a different faith from that established in her realm. She would not—she dared not—make merchandise of her religion by changing it to escape persecution, or to promote her temporal interests; but she proved her willingness that her son should be allowed the privilege of being very fully instructed in the doctrines and practice of the Protestant Church, by consigning him to the tuition of one of the Lords of the Congregation. It was her wish to deliver this precious charge to Mar with her own hands, and she wrote to him to meet her at Linlithgow for that purpose; but he excused himself under

the plea that he was confined to his bed, and unable to undertake the journey.[1] She therefore sent the Prince to Stirling, March 19, under the care of her brother-in-law, the Earl of Argyll, and the Earl of Huntley, by whom he was safely conveyed, sleeping one night on the road, and was by them consigned to the Earl of Mar on the 20th, in all due form.[2]

Mary's resolution of confiding her son to the care of the Earl of Mar, appears to have been dictated by the purest feelings of maternal love, and solicitude for the safety, health, and weal of the babe. Stirling Castle had been her own salubrious nursery from her ninth month till she was five years old. Her earliest and happiest recollections were associated with her residence there, and with her visits to Inchmahome, of which John Erskine, her preceptor, this very Earl of Mar, was then the Prior. In placing her son with him, she fondly thought to secure for that dear one a series of those blessed days of peace and joy which never could return to her.

Although it was the custom of the Sovereign of Scotland, from the earliest period when oral chronicles assume the form of history, to consign the heir of the realm for nurture and education to the care of some great nobleman, who, as in the case of the representative of the house of Erskine, claimed the custody of the princely child by hereditary right, derived from a long line of ancestors, nothing but the alarm the mysterious tragedy of his father's murder had excited, would probably have induced the royal mother to deprive herself of the solace of watching over the daily improving beauty and intelligence of her lovely boy. The day she parted with him he completed his ninth month. How dire must have been the necessity that induced her, fond as she was of children, to send her first-born from her

[1] Buchanan.

[2] Mary has been accused by Buchanan and his copyists of bartering the custody of the Prince to Mar, in exchange for the surrender of Edinburgh Castle, in order to make Bothwell captain of that royal fortress before his trial; but this, like all the rest of the charges he has brought against his benefactress, is a perversion of facts. The custody of Edinburgh Castle was not intrusted to Bothwell by the Queen, but to Sir James Cockburn, the Laird of Skarling, and finally to Sir James Balfour.

at that charming period of infancy, when smiles and dimples are most attractive, and the mute language of affection is eloquently expressed in the beaming eyes, the outstretched arms, and the soft panting of the guileless breast that flutters with delight at the greeting of maternal love. Four days only after the departure of her boy, Mary, whose heart was still with him, and mindful of all his little wants, drew up the following "Memorandum for my Lord Prince:"—

"Item, of Holland cloth, lx ells; of white Spanish taffaty, x ells; white armosie taffaty, vi ells; white Florence ribbons, lxxx ells; white knittings, lx ells. Item, of small Lyncum twine, xvi ounce; one stick of white buckram, and one stick of fine *cameraige* [cambric]."[1]

The following quaint note is subjoined:—

"Maistor Robert Richertsoun, Thesaurer, yo sall not fail to answer Madame de Mar of this foresaid gear, ye keeping this precept for your warrant. Subscrivit with our hand. At Edinburgh, the xxiij day of March 1566-7.

"MARIE R."[2]

Attached to the memorandum of necessaries for the Prince appear two items for the use of the royal mother; viz., "xxiiii papers of *prenis* (black pins) for the Queen's Grace's *dule;* also xii ells of small linen, to be foot polkis to the Queen's Grace."[3] So Mary's feet were cold of nights, it should seem, and she slept with them in bags or pokes. In the same month of March, her Majesty, when looking over the furniture of her Chapel-Royal with the officers of her wardrobe stores, ordered one of the rich copes and four tunicles of cloth-of-gold to be made into the hangings and curtains of a bed for her baby boy. Womanlike, she beguiled her regal cares and personal woes by superintending the cutting and contriving these consecrated vestments for the new purpose to which she thought proper to appropriate them. She bestowed, at the same time, three priest's copes on that perverse heretic, the Earl of Bothwell; and this is the only authentic record of any gift she ever presented to him, with the exception of the dress she provided for his livery at the christening of the

[1] See Royal Wardrobe Inventories—Diurnal of Occurrents.
[2] From the inedited precepts in the general Register House, Edinburgh.
[3] Ibid.

Prince;[1] but then, as she gave the like to the Earls of Moray and Argyll, no inference of her favour can be drawn from that circumstance in which the other two might not as fairly be included. It is worthy of remark, that neither portrait, ring, locket, nor any other token of regard of or from Bothwell, can be traced among her jewels. Miniatures and portraits of her first dearly-loved and ever-regretted consort, Francis II., she fondly preserved, till they were torn from her, among her other little relics, by the pitiless commissioners for her last spoliation at Chartley, when it was discovered that she had treasured with no less care several miniatures of her "late lord, King Henry," as she always styled Darnley. One of these was set in a folding frame of gold, in the form of a book, with her own picture and that of the Prince their son between them. Is it possible that any woman who had been consenting to the murder of her husband, would have annoyed herself, in her long years of captivity, sickness, and sorrow, by contemplating his likeness and that of their boy, thus united? Does not the very circumstance witness that her conscience regarding Darnley was free from reproach, that her reconciliation with him at Glasgow had been perfect and sincere, and all remembrance of his trespasses against her blotted out by sorrow for his calamitous death, and that she cherished his memory and contemplated his features with no less tenderness than she dwelt on those of her son, sole pledge of their ill-fated loves?

But to return to the regular order of the narrative. After an interval of sixteen days, Lennox resumed his correspondence with his royal daughter-in-law,[2] declaring his suspicions of Bothwell and several other persons, whose names had

[1] Including three-quarters of an ell of rayed cloth-of-silver, to cover the shoes he was to wear on that occasion.—Treasury Accounts.

[2] This letter, dated March 17th, she could not have received earlier than the 18th, or possibly the 19th, the day she sent the infant Prince to Stirling. Her arrangements with the Earl of Mar for confiding that important charge to his safe keeping, and receiving the surrender of the Castle of Edinburgh, which Mar had illegally obtained during the troubles of her late mother the Queen-Regent, had been made several days previously to the date of Lennox's letter, and could have no reference to any measure resulting from it. Laing's inferences on the subject of Bothwell's trial are consequently incorrect.

been mentioned in the placards, or, "tickets," as he styles the anonymous papers denouncing them as the murderers of his son.

It is a fact worthy of notice, that there are two versions of Lennox's letter of March 17th. Both are printed by Keith —one from the Cotton MSS., the other from that subjoined by Buchanan to his libel, the Detection. That preserved in the Cottonian MSS. has every mark of being the genuine document, as it refers to intermediate letters of a private and friendly character which had passed between Lennox and his royal daughter-in-law during the long hiatus in their public correspondence, from the 1st of March to the 17th. Buchanan, as the literary organ of the conspirators, might judge it necessary to remove the evidence that Lennox had been asking personal favour of the Queen in that interval; hence his substitution of a letter more to the purpose of those whose object it was to suppress or prevent every circumstance from which an argument in her favour might be drawn.

THE EARL OF LENNOX TO QUEEN MARY.

"I thank your Majesty most humbly for your gentle answer, as touching the ward of the Lennox. Albeit the same does not signify unto me whether it be your Majesty's will to bestow the same on me or not, or otherwise to dispense with the Prince's age, conform to my writing and humble suit, wherein I would be glad to know your Majesty's pleasure.

"Further, where your Majesty in your former letter writes unto me, 'that if there be any names mentioned in the tickets that were affixed on the Tolbooth door of Edinburgh that I think worthy to suffer a trial for the murder of the King, your Majesty's husband, upon my advertisement your Majesty should proceed to the cognition-taking as may stand with the laws of this realm, and being found culpable, shall see the punishment as rigorously execute as the weight of the crime deserves.' Pleasit your Majesty, my humble petition was unto your Highness, and yet is, that it may please you not only to apprehend and put in sure keeping the persons named in the tickets which answered your Majesty's first and second proclamations, but also with diligence to assemble your Majesty's whole nobility, and there, by open proclamation, to admonish and require the writers of the said tickets to appear, according to the effect thereof. At which time, if they do not, your Majesty may, by advice of your said nobility and Council, relieve and put to liberty the persons in the tickets foresaid. And for the names of the persons foresaid, I marvel that the same has been kept from your Majesty's ears, considering the effect of the tickets, and the names of the persons so openly talked of—that is to say, in the first ticket,

the Earl of Bothwell, Maister James Balfour, Maister David Chalmers, and black John Spens; and in the second ticket, Seignour Francis Bastian, John de Bourdeaux, and Joseph, David's brother, which persons, I assure your Majesty, I for my part greatly suspect; and now your Majesty knows their names, and being the *partie* as well and more than I am, although I was the father, I doubt not but your Majesty will take order in the matter, according to the weight of the cause, which I most entirely and humbly beseech. So commit your Majesty to the protection of Almighty God, xvii of March 1656-7."[1]

As the Queen was asserted, in the first placard or ticket, to have consented to her husband's murder, through the enchantments of Lady Buccleuch, it was undoubtedly a great affront to her for her father-in-law to write to her, requiring her to proceed on the denunciations contained in that paper. She testified no displeasure, however, but calmly replied to him, as before, in her regal character. She was probably aware that he had written on the 9th of that month to Cecil, begging the interference of Queen Elizabeth for the revenge of the murder of his son, and had sent messages to the same effect, both to the English Sovereign and her Minister,[2] through Killigrew, whose intrigues with Moray and the other conspirators are sufficiently apparent; her answer was as follows:—

"From Edinburgh, 23d March 1566-7.

"Right trust cousin and counsellor, we greet you well. We have received your letter of Houston, the 17th of this instant, relative to our last writing sent you, and specially naming the persons contained in the tickets ye greatly suspect. For the convention of our nobility and Council, we have *prevented* [anticipated] the thing desired by you in your letter, and has sent for them to be *at* us in Edinburgh this week approaching, where the persons nominate in your letter shall abide, and underly such trial as by the laws of this realm is accustomed; and being found culpable in anywise of that crime and odious fact nominate on the tickets, and whereof ye suspect them, we shall, even according to our former letter, see condign punishment as rigorously and extremely executed as the weight of that fact deserves. For, indeed, as ye wrote, 'we esteem ourselves party, if

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[1] Keith, 372. The same names are enumerated in Buchanan's variation of the letter, with the addition of that of Gilbert Balfour. Robert Balfour, the Provost of Kirk-of-Field, must have been the person meant, as Gilbert was the Captain of Kirkwall Castle.

[2] Lennox to Cecil—State Paper Office MS., March 9.

we were resolved of the authors.' Therefore we pray you, if your leisure and commodity may serve, address you to be with us here in Edinburgh this week approaching, where ye may see the said trial, and declare these things ye know may further the same; and there ye shall have experience of our earnest will and effectious mind to have an end in this matter, and the authors of so unworthy a deed really punished, as far forth, in effect, as before this and now presently we have written and promised. And so for the present commit you to God.

"At Edinburgh, the xxiii day of March 1566-7.

"Your *gude*-daughter,

"MARIE R."[1]

What more could she have said on the subject? As far as possibility permitted, she performed all she there promised. But the realities of the case must be taken into consideration. Mary was neither autocrat nor caliph, possessed of despotic authority over a nation of non-resisting slaves, with power to inflict imprisonment, torture, or death, on a vague suspicion. We have shown the extreme peril she was in from Knox and the excited mobs of Edinburgh, in consequence of her arresting those two lawless rioters, Cranstoun and Armstrong. She was then acting by the advice of her Ministers and Privy Council; whereas she was now required to arrest her principal Minister of State, one of the most potent barons in her realm, the commander of her military force, on her own authority, when no other presumption of his guilt had been brought forward than the denunciation of an anonymous placard. The fact that Lady Buccleuch and herself were included in the accusation of the nameless foe who had branded him, must have impressed her with the strongest idea that Bothwell was equally clear of any participation in the crime. The trial of it rested not with her, but with her Council, her Lords of Session, and the Estates of her realm. These she had immediately convened, to assist her in her endeavours to unravel a mystery in which the majority of them were only too deeply implicated. Her father-in-law, suspecting, perhaps, from the undisguised hostility of the nobles of Scotland to Darnley, that they might not feel disposed either to institute a very close inquiry into the circumstances of his murder, or deal sufficiently rigorously with his murderers, turns round upon her, and begs

[1] Labanoff, vol. ii. Keith.

"her not to defer the trial of the matter till the meeting of the Estates, for it was not a parliamentary matter."[1] In what manner, then, was the trial to be conducted, if not by the united power and wisdom of the realm in Parliament assembled? He replies, "that he desires it to be done by herself, assisted by her Council and a convention of her nobles, and urges her to take order for the trial without delay." "The trial of whom?" she asks. "Of the persons named in certain placards or tickets that have been put forth." "The tickets," she replies, "are numerous, and vary as to the names of the persons they denounce. On which ticket does he wish her to proceed?" she inquires. He delays his reply to this plain question for sixteen days, during which pause he intrigues with Killigrew and writes to Cecil to request the intervention of the English Sovereign; and more than this, he forms a secret league with a junta of titled traitors to depose Mary, and place his infant grandson on her throne, the leader of that confederacy being the Earl of Moray, the very man whom of all others it would have been most reasonable for him to suspect of procuring the murder, since he had plotted Darnley's assassination only eighteen months before at the Kirk of Beith, of which plot Lennox himself was to have been one of the victims—ay, and had ridden a desperate race for life in company with Darnley and Queen Mary, on the last day of June 1565, in consequence. Lennox had, however, condoned that quarrel when he entered into a base confederacy with Moray in the succeeding February, for the purpose of murdering Riccio and others of Mary's Cabinet, and compelling her to resign the sovereignty of Scotland to her husband. But Darnley, penetrating Moray's ambitious views, and detesting his hypocrisy, had eluded his snares, and when he had succeeded in escaping with the Queen from Holyrood Abbey, had broken with him and his party for ever. There had been nothing but jealousy, offices of hatred, and struggles for the guidance of the Queen, between Darnley and Moray, till Darnley received his *quietus* in the Provost's house of Kirk-of-Field, while Moray got

[1] Letter of Lennox to Queen Mary, p. 224.

cleverly out of the responsibility of assisting in the deed-doing, or the danger of arrest on suspicion of being its instigator. Nor had he dared to return to Edinburgh till after the arrival of his friend the English ambassador, Killigrew. Lennox, whose head was not the clearest in the world, was blind to these facts, and had been deluded by his kinsman Atholl into joining the confederacy at Dunkeld against the Queen, under the pretext of avenging Darnley's death.

Mary had, in the mean time, done all that was proper and constitutional. She had convened her Parliament by proclamation, called her scattered Council together, and provided for the safety of her infant son by placing him, as she fondly imagined, in honest and impartial hands, before the struggle should recommence between the two factions, whose strife had so long convulsed her realm, lest he should be made, like herself, who was now virtually in the hands of Bothwell's predominant faction, a prey to the strongest. The Earl of Mar was Moray's uncle, but she loved and trusted him nevertheless with the generous confidence of her nature. How he requited her will be shown anon.

The agonising excitement of the circumstances in which she, poor powerless victim, was placed, and the terrible shock her feelings had sustained, began now to produce visible effects on Mary's health. Her faded woe-worn appearance, though observed by all, was far from touching the hard hearts of those who were aggravating the pangs of a bleeding heart with the envenomed shafts of calumny. The fact that she was apparently sinking under her intolerable burden of grief and care, was duly communicated through their agents to the English Warden at Berwick, without a word of commiseration. "She hath been," writes Drury to Cecil, "for the most part either melancholy or sickly ever since, especially this week—upon Tuesday and Wednesday often swooned. There is great calling upon the Court for money by divers. The ware and other necessaries for the time of the baptism, which was taken, promising payment at Candlemas, will be unpaid at Whit-

suntide. I am informed that there was hard shift for the stuff for Mr Killigrew's chain; so is there the like to furnish necessary things for domestic matters. 'We have borrowed so long, as we can no more.'"[1] The poverty of the fair northern Sovereign rendered hers a hopeless case. Genius, beauty, eloquence, all the graces of womanhood, united with the courage and intellect of her royal forefathers, atoned not for her lack of gold. The age of chivalry was over, and that of mammon-worship had commenced. "The Queen," continues Drury, "breaketh very much. Upon Sunday last divers were witness, for there was mass of Requiem and Dirige for the King's soul."[2] Five days later the royal widow attended one of the midnight services of her Church for the departed, and, notwithstanding the melancholy state of her health and spirits, and the inclemency of the season, spent several hours kneeling in prayer in the cold Chapel of Holyrood, offering up those prayers which she had been taught to consider essential for the repose of his soul. Her vigil was strictly private. "The Queen," writes Drury, "went on Friday night, with two gentlewomen with her, into the Chapel, about eleven, and tarried there till near unto three of the clock."[3]

The above testimony, though from a pen obviously unfriendly to Mary Stuart, proves that at the very date, from March 21 to April 5, when she is slanderously affirmed, in the journal of her proceedings presented by Moray to the English Council, to have been at Seton, "passing her time merrily with Bothwell,"[4] she was in Edinburgh, engaged in the arduous duties of her onerous position, struggling with the embarrassment of an empty exchequer, the intrigues of a powerful neighbour, and the villanies of domestic traitors, her only solace assisting at masses, diriges, and midnight prayers for the soul of her unfortunate consort, kneeling in juxtaposition to his murdered corpse. How touching is the picture of the royal widow when sketched according to the realities of life and nature, sinking beneath the weight of her accumulated sufferings of mind and body,

[1] Drury to Cecil, March 29, 1566-7—State Paper Office MS., inedited.
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] Laing's Appendix. Anderson's Collections.

oppressed with sickly pining melancholy, and falling from one deadly swoon into another. How different this from the representations of her political libeller Buchanan, who painted her, not as she was, but according to the instructions he received from the usurpers of her government, and their powerful confederate Cecil.[1]

The public mind was kept in a violent state of excitement on the subject of the murder of Darnley. "It is affirmed of many credible persons," writes Drury to Cecil, "that there is a man that nightly goeth about Edinburgh, crying penitently and lamentably in certain streets of that town, 'Vengeance on those that caused me to shed innocent blood! O Lord, open the heavens and pour down vengeance on those that have destroyed the innocent!' This man walketh in the street, accompanied by four or five to guard him; and some have offered to take knowledge of him, but they have been prevented by those about him."[2]

When the Queen passed through the High Street on one occasion, the market-women greeted her with the cry "God bless and preserve your Grace, if ye be *saikless* [innocent] of the King's death!"[3] How bitter an aggravation to her calamity—for such, if we only regard the death of Darnley in a political point of view, undoubtedly it was—must it have been for her to perceive that it was possible for her to be involved in a suspicion of having been a party to so foul a crime,—

[1] This assertion regarding Cecil is fully borne out by the fact that he assisted them in every possible way in all their treasonable practices against their Sovereign: even before her return from France, he was the confidant and encourager of all their nefarious confederacies, and lent them money to carry out their plots. He even lent editorial assistance in their libels against her, both before her deposition and after her cruel detention in England. The first edition of the translation of Buchanan's "Detection," with the subsidiary documents, since printed with it in Anderson's Collections, was actually prepared for the press by his understrapper, Dr Wilson, as Malcolm Laing himself acknowledges. Wilson added to that choice *resumé* a lengthy rhapsody of his own composing, in the form of an oration, exaggerating in very turgid and indelicate language all Buchanan's coarse slanders of the captive Queen. Queen Elizabeth blushed not to extend her public patronage to Messrs Buchanan and Wilson, by accepting the dedication of their united labours against her royal kinswoman, and causing it to be widely circulated in England and Scotland. Wilson, who throve well on the base calling of a slanderer, afterwards belied Lesley, Bishop of Ross, by protending "he told him 'that Mary had poisoned her first husband, Francis II.'" [2] April 10, 1566-7—Border Correspondence. [3] Tytler.

a crime which, if emanating from her, would have been the most reckless act of political suicide.

Among other cruel devices practised against Mary at this season by her cowardly assailants, was the dissemination of gross personal caricatures, which, like the placards charging her as an accomplice in her husband's murder, were fixed on the doors of churches and other public places in Edinburgh. Rewards were vainly offered for the discovery of the limners by whom "these treasonable painted tickets," as they were styled in the proclamations, were designed. Mary was peculiarly annoyed at one of these productions, called "The Mermaid," which represented her in the character of a crowned syren, with a sceptre formed of a fish's tail in her hand, and flanked with the regal initials M.R. This curious specimen of party malignity is still preserved in the State Paper Office. It is very well drawn in pen and ink, and preserves a striking likeness of Mary's lovely features, but with the melancholy expression of sickness and sorrow, and wasted even to attenuation, agreeing well with Drury's description of her woeful appearance when assisting at the services for the repose of her husband's soul.[1]

Two especial Privy Councils were held by her Majesty in Edinburgh, one on the 24th of March, the other on the 28th, to take into consideration the best and most effectual means by which the requisition of the Earl of Lennox, for prosecuting the parties named in the placards as the murderers of the late King her husband, might be carried into effect. At the first of these, Bothwell rose, with the well-dissembled frankness of an honest man, and said, "that as his name had been openly coupled with this odious accusation, he could not allow so foul a blot to be thrown on his character, and demanded to be put on his trial, offering to surrender himself, in the mean time, a prisoner, and to remain

[1] James Murray, a former intimate, but at this time the deadly foe of Bothwell, was suspected, though he held a post in the Queen's household, and was the brother of her Comptroller, the Laird of Tullibardine, and the Countess of Mar, to be the artist by whom this ungrateful outrage on his Sovereign had been perpetrated. He absconded soon after; and the Queen dismissed Tullibardine from her service. Both the brothers were members of the secret confederacy against her.

in ward till after his assize."[1] This was assuming the demeanour of an innocent person, although he was far otherwise; but his hardy bearing resulted from his being in possession of the bond bearing the signatures of several of the confederates in the murder, on whose protection he relied—not without reason, as the event proved. "I shall let you see what I had for me," was his rejoinder, when his terrified vassal and accomplice, the Laird of Ormiston, came to him in his chamber, and said, "What devil is this now, my lord, that every one suspects you of this deed, and cries a vengeance on you for the same, and few or no other spoken of but you?" Then Bothwell showed him the bond, with the subscriptions to it, telling him "it was devisit by Sir James Balfour, and subscribed by them all a quarter of a year before the deed was done."[2] Notwithstanding, however, his confidence in the support of his powerful accomplices, Bothwell took pretty good care to guard himself from the honest indignation of the populace, seldom going abroad without the attendance of fifty armed horsemen. When thus accompanied, he assumed an air of bravado, and, riding up to the Mercat Cross, where one of the papers denouncing him as the principal murderer of the King was set up, he tore it down, and swore a deep oath, "that if he could find the deviser of the same, he would wash his hands in his heart's blood."[3] Like Richard III. after the murder of the young Princes in the tower, he never spake to any stranger without having his hand on the hilt of his dagger. His trial was appointed to take place in the Tolbooth, April 12: his first step towards his defence was to bring Morton back to Court. The Earl of Moray, who had up to that period behaved in the most amicable manner to him, and received him at his own table as his invited guest, thought proper to retire from Scotland on the 9th of April, three days only before that appointed for the trial, thus avoiding the dangerous alternatives of acting publicly either for or against him on that occasion, leaving, as he

[1] Spotiswood. Crawford's Memoirs.
[2] The Laird of Ormiston's Confession, in Arnott's Criminal Trials.
[3] Drury to Cecil.

had done before, his able confederates, Lethington and Morton, to play the game at home, so as to involve the Queen in public odium, by linking her to Bothwell's cause irrevocably; while he proceeded to conclude in person his secret arrangements with the English government for her deposition.

The Queen wept passionately when Moray came to take his leave of her, and besought him to remain in Scotland. This he utterly refused to do, falsely assuring her "he was deeply in debt, weary of public business, and intended to spend five years abroad."[1] She desired him, in that case, "neither to go to England nor France, but to embark for Flanders." If he promised not obedience to her commands, it is scarcely probable that she would have granted him permission to depart. But it is certain he acted in direct contradiction to her desire, for he proceeded immediately to Berwick, where he remained several days; at which time Drury's letters to Cecil assume a more than ordinary tone of malignant slander against Queen Mary, and disclose particulars of the last moments of Darnley, which must have been derived from a person who had been art and part in the murder, since dead men tell no tales. Moray, having completed his business at Berwick, proceeded to the Court of England, where he was affectionately received by Queen Elizabeth. After remaining there as long as suited his convenience, he went to France. He there concerted his plans so ably with the Queen-Regent and the Huguenot party, with whom she was then enleagued, as to prevent Mary from receiving the slightest aid from France in the time of her distress.

The day for Bothwell's trial having been fixed by the Privy Council for the 12th of April, the Queen addressed her royal letters to her pursuivants, March 27th, commanding them to summons the Earl of Lennox to appear in the Tolbooth on that day as the pursuer, or person demanding the trial, and produce his evidences against the Earl of Bothwell and others by him accused. The same proclamation enjoined "any of her Majesty's lieges who had acquired

[1] Border Correspondence—State Paper Office.

any knowledge therein to come into the said Court, and depose all they knew of the matter."[1] These proclamations were openly made, according to the usual forms, at the Mercat Cross, Edinburgh, March 29; at Glasgow, the Earl's usual dwelling-place, the following day; and a summons requiring his attendance at the trial was delivered at his houses at Glasgow and Dumbarton. If Lennox considered he had cause for complaint that the Queen, in compliance with his reiterated demand for her to expedite the judicial inquiry, and by no means to delay it till the assembling of the Parliament, had fixed too early a day, he had ample opportunity for making his objections — ay, and for making them by word of mouth — in a fatherly manner, to herself, since she had in her letter of the 23d "requested him to come to Edinburgh to assist her with his presence and advice;"[2]—facts which are conveniently ignored by those who have made out a case against Mary, by accusing her of doing the things she did not do, and of leaving undone the things which surviving records witness for her she did. It has been objected that by the laws of Scotland forty days' notice of the trial was requisite; but this was an indulgence mercifully accorded to the defenders of actions; so that it was not Lennox the pursuer, but Bothwell, who had cause to complain of an innovation in the legal forms usual on such occasions, the legal term having been abridged for the purpose of gratifying Lennox's demand for prompt measures. How, otherwise, was the trial to take place before the meeting of Parliament? The Queen had, in reply to his reiterated importunity for that purpose, solemnly promised "that she would not defer the trial till the meeting of the Parliament,"[3] and she had redeemed her pledge by appointing the last day before it met. Lennox, however, was not satisfied; he had suspicions, but no proofs, of Bothwell's guilt; and aware that an acquittal, under such circumstances, must take place, he wrote to Queen Elizabeth; requesting her "to use her influence to have the assize postponed." To his royal daughter-in-law he also wrote, but not till the eleventh

[1] Anderson's Collections, vol. i. pp. 97-100. [2] Keith. Labanoff.
[3] Cotton. MSS.

hour, protesting against so early a day, and requiring her to arrest the persons whom he had accused, in order to give him time to collect necessary evidence.[1] His letter is dated from Stirling, April 11th; it is therefore very unlikely that Mary received it earlier than the morning of the 12th, for it generally took two days to perform a journey that is now easily accomplished in four hours. But even if the messenger exerted the greatest speed, he could not reach Edinburgh till late on the night of the 11th. If Mary had delayed the trial then, it would, she well knew, have been treated as a presumption that it was not her intention for it to take place at all. It is doubtful withal, surrounded as she was by the traitors who had bound themselves to bear Bothwell out scaithless in any legal proceeding in which he might be "*put at* for the deed," whether her voice would have had the slightest weight in the matter. She was a young defenceless woman in the hands of the two parties which then divided Scotland, as the Whigs and Tories, in later times, have done England; and the leaders of both had united to murder her husband, and pledged themselves to obtain an illegal acquittal of their instrument.

On the morning appointed for the trial, a letter from Queen Elizabeth to Mary was brought by the Provost Marshal of Berwick to Holyrood, urging her to postpone the assize. He was told "that her Majesty was sleeping," and no one seemed disposed to deliver the letter of which he was the bearer. At last Hepburn, parson of Oldhamstocks, came to him, and told him "he had mentioned his business to the Earl of Bothwell, who advised him to take his ease, for her Majesty was so molested and disquieted with the business of that day that he saw no likelihood of his being able to speak with her till it was over." Instead of asking him to rest or refresh himself, he kept the said messenger without the gate, and threatened "to hang his Scotch guide for bringing such English villains as sought to stay the assize." Then Lethington came out with Bothwell, and, demanding his letter, took it from him, and returned with it into the Palace, and, after tarrying about

[1] Keith.

half an hour, came forth again, and would have passed on without taking further notice of him; but the Provost Marshal, pressing up to him through the crowd, inquired "if he had delivered his letter to the Queen of Scots, and what answer it pleased her Majesty to send?" Lethington replied "that she was still sleeping, and therefore he had not delivered it, and thought there would not be any meet time to do so till after the assize was over." The incivility with which the English messenger was treated —for he was not once suffered to come within the Palace gates—was very different from the courtesy and hospitality practised by Mary Stuart to strangers, especially those from England, whom it was both her pride and policy to propitiate. But it is clearly evident that Lethington and Bothwell, confederates in guilt, took care not to allow any one to have access to her who might be likely to induce her to alter their arrangements for the trial. But even if she received and read the letter Elizabeth had, in compliance with Lennox's request, addressed to her on this subject, its effect must have been rather to confirm than alter her decision in regard to a measure against which the English Sovereign thought proper to protest, in a tone most revolting to a princess of Mary's high spirit. Advice offered in the spirit of insult and dictation is seldom accepted by the person on whom it is obtruded. Elizabeth, while she betrayed her unappeasable hatred to Darnley by denying him, even in his grave, the ceremonial title of King of Scotland, assumed a right to interfere in the manner in which the trials of the persons accused of his murder were conducted, and gave the royal widow to understand "that she was strongly suspected of being an accomplice in that foul deed," and assured her "that this opinion would be confirmed if she did not endeavour to give the defunct gentleman's father and friends all the satisfaction in her power by adjourning the assize." Mary had had too many proofs of Elizabeth's hostility to Darnley, not to perceive that she was now acting an insincere part in affecting to bewail a murder which the leaders of the English faction in Scotland had endeavoured to perpetrate eighteen months before. After

their failure, had they not been assisted by Elizabeth with money through her ambassador to enable them to rebel, and granted a refuge and protection in England, when they fled from the vengeance their treasons against their native Sovereign, and their plots against her consort's life, had provoked? How, then, could Mary be expected to place the slightest confidence in the English Sovereign's professions of regret for Darnley's tragic fate, far less to be guided by her suggestions as to the authors of a deed that had been previously conspired by the secret-service-men of England?

Mary's confidence in Bothwell's innocence was founded on the natural but fallacious ground that he had never been convicted of receiving bribes from Elizabeth. The marked hostility always manifested against him by that Government operated consequently in his favour with her, and disposed her rather to regard him as an incorruptible servant than as the unprincipled ruffian he really was; but the love of money was not his besetting sin. It was at this agitating period Mary is supposed to have received that well-known letter from Beton, Archbishop of Glasgow, her ambassador at the Court of France,[1] which has been so often quoted as presumptive evidence of her being an accomplice in the murder of her husband. It ought rather to be regarded as a noble proof of the uncompromising fidelity of a minister, who shrank not from the duty of telling her plainly the reports that had been circulated to her disadvantage on the Continent in connection with the recent mysterious occurrence. "I ask your Majesty's pardon," observes he, "that I write thus far, for I can hear nothing to your prejudice, but I maun write the same that all may come to your knowledge, for the better *remeid* may be put thereto. Here it is needful that ye forth show now, rather than ever before, the great virtue, magnanimity, and constancy that God has granted you, by whose grace I hope ye shall overcome this most heavy envy and displeasure of the committing thereof, and preserve that reputation in all godliness ye have acquired of long, which can appear no ways more clearly than that ye do such justice as to the

[1] Dated Paris, March 11, 1567—Sloane MS., vol. iii. p. 199.

whole world may declare your innocence, and give testimony for ever of their treason that has committed without fear of God or man so cruel and ungodly a murder." And here it may be observed that there is not the slightest hint or allusion to Bothwell, either as the principal or accomplice in the crime, far less of any imputation on Mary's virtue, in regard to the passion she has been accused of cherishing for him. It is certain that if she had committed herself by any breach of feminine propriety with Bothwell, either before or after her husband's murder, her honest monitor Beton, armed as he was, in her opinion, with the authority of her own Church, would not have hesitated to remonstrate with her very sternly on the subject, more especially as Bothwell was a Protestant, and as uncompromising an enemy to the Romish system as the acquisition of a large share of ecclesiastical domains could render him—the creed of wicked men being, of course, regulated by their worldly interests; and the influence of such a person, had he really been supposed to possess any over the mind of Queen Mary, would naturally have been regarded, not only with suspicion, but horror, by one of her Roman Catholic primates. It is, therefore, a strong argument that no grounds really existed for such a reproach, that Archbishop Beton, who must have had full information from Father Edmonds as to her conduct, neither insinuates charges of personal levity against her, nor warns her in any way that evil constructions had been or might be placed on those confidential relations with Bothwell that must necessarily exist between a sovereign and her principal minister of state. As a man well acquainted with the affairs of Scotland, and the realities of Mary's position as the Sovereign of so turbulent a nation, Beton knew she must be assisted in carrying on the business of government by some of her great nobles, and that Bothwell, having the army and navy, had necessarily succeeded to that office from the responsibilities of which Moray had fled a few hours before the assassination of her consort. Writing, however, from the sick-bed to which he had been confined, by a dangerous fever, for several weeks, this worthy prelate, while exhorting his royal mistress to contradict,

by the wisdom and prudence of her conduct, the sinister reports which, through the malice of her evil-willers, were then circulated against her, thus directs her to address herself to a higher power for counsel and deliverance: "Yet is not the hand of God and his mighty power shortened, but by his comfort and help, imploring truly the same, and serving him with all your heart, ye may have such consolation by him that ye shall be able to remove that is to your Majesty's harm or disadvantage, and establish the expectation that hitherto the whole world has conceived of your virtue; and I beseech your Majesty right humbly cast here the *foundment* of your relief, and all the rest of your desires shall come to pass to your contentment and honour; otherwise I fear this to be only the beginning and first act of the tragedy." He then informs her that, after he had put himself and servants into *dule* habit, he had not a *sous* left, and was constrained to abide where he then was for lack of means to depart, till he should receive funds for that purpose from Dolu, her French treasurer. This lack of money sufficiently explains the supineness of the mercenary Cabinet of France in her behalf, when the storm predicted in Beton's letter overwhelmed the hapless Scottish Queen.

He tells his royal mistress—and this is the most important paragraph in his letter—"that the Spanish ambassador, when he thanked him in her name for the hint he had given him of the meditated treason, which had been too fatally realised before the warning reached the Scottish Court, emphatically rejoined, 'Suppose it came too late, yet apprise her Majesty that I am informed by the same means as I was before, that there is still some notable enterprise in hand against her, whereof I wish her to beware in time,'"[1] —utterly refusing to give further explanation. The terror with which this second intimation was calculated to appal the royal widow, after two such frightful occurrences as the assassinations of her secretary and her husband, may be imagined. Its effect may be traced in the bewilderment of her usually brilliant and energetic mind. She was panic-

[1] Stevenson's Illustrations.

stricken, and resigned herself to the guidance of her Council. The trial of Bothwell took place, as a matter of course, on the day appointed. Accompanied by his accomplice and tempter Lethington, and guarded by two hundred harquebussiers, and followed by a voluntary escort of four thousand gentlemen, he passed "with a merry and lusty cheer to the Tolbooth." The Earl of Argyll presided, according to his vocation as hereditary Justice-General of Scotland, Lord Lindsay of the Byres, the husband of the Earl of Moray's sister, Henry Balnaves and James Makgill, who had been traitors to Mary from her cradle, and were notoriously creatures of Moray, were sworn as judges, together with Pitcairn of Dunfermline. The jurors, fifteen in number, were all men of high rank: one of them, indeed, the Lord John Hamilton, second son to the Duke of Châtelherault, was a Prince of the blood; two others, the Earl of Cassillis and Lord Sempill, had both been in arms against the Queen, and were a few weeks later ranked among her foes. Morton rode with Bothwell to the Tolbooth, but excused himself from assisting at the assize by saying, that, "though the King had forgotten his part in respect of nature towards him, yet for that he was his kinsman he would rather pay the forfeit," which was a hundred pounds Scotch.[1] The enmity that notoriously subsisted between him and Darnley rendered it too dangerous for him to take any part on the trial of a person accused of his murder.

Bothwell was charged with being "art and part in the cruel and horrible slaughter of the right excellent, right high, and mighty Prince the King's Grace, dearest spouse for the time to our Sovereign Lady the Queen's Majesty. And this," proceeds the indictment, "ye did upon the 9th day of February last bypast, under silence of night, which is notourly known, and which ye cannot deny."[2] But this Bothwell did deny; and no witness came forward to depose the slightest circumstance tending to convict him of the crime with which he was thus positively charged by the Queen's Advocates. When the Earl of Lennox was called

[1] Drury to Cecil, April 15, 1566—State Paper Office MS.
[2] Anderson's Collections, vol. ii.

into Court, "with all other of her Majesty's lieges acting, or pretending to act, as pursuers in this cause," Robert Cuninghame, one of Lennox's servants, appeared in behalf of the said Earl his master, and read a paper, stating "that his lord was unable to attend on account of the shortness of the notice, and because he was in fear of his life, being denied liberty to bring such a following as he considered needful for his defence.[1] Therefore he required the trial to be put off for forty days, or such time as he might require to bring sufficient proofs of his charge against the murderers, whom he required to have committed to prison till such time as he should be prepared to convict them." The Justice-Clerk, Sir John Bellenden, replied to the protestation put in by Cuninghame, by ordering two of the Earl of Lennox's letters to the Queen, urging despatch, and desiring "short and summary process," to be read in the Court; whereupon all the judges, and jurors assembled for the assize, concurred in opinion "that it should proceed, and trial be made that day, notwithstanding the protest that had been made in the name of the said Earl." Bothwell was of course acquitted, as no evidence was produced for the prosecution. In his Memorial he declares that "he proved an *alibi*."[2] That he had somewhat to say in his defence, and brought witnesses to support it, is evident, for the trial lasted from eleven in the morning till seven at night.

Immediately after the verdict of acquittal was pronounced, Bothwell set up a cartel, declaring his innocence of the crime that had been imputed to him, and offering "to maintain the same against any challenger by his own body, whether Scot, Englishman, or Frenchman," provided it were not an infamed person.[3] A placard was exhibited in reply, stating "that his challenge was accepted by James Murray of Tullibardine;" but Bothwell did not respond to the defiance of his old adversary, flattering himself, perhaps, that, if the public excitement were not kept up, it would die

[1] Namely, three thousand armed men, which he had raised for that purpose.—Border Correspondence.

[2] Affaires du Conte de Bodouel—Bell's Appendix.

[3] Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. vii.

away. If so, he was strangely mistaken in his calculation. The crime of which he was suspected was so enormous, and the manner in which it had been perpetrated was of a character too astounding to be forgotten like a nine days' wonder of common occurrence. It continues to be matter of debate and discussion to the present hour.

A few days after Bothwell's acquittal, Captain Blackader, one of his followers, succeeded in capturing the man whose nightly invocations of "vengeance on the shedder of innocent blood," with denunciations of the names of the alleged murderers, had for many weeks troubled the repose of the slumbering city. He was immediately incarcerated in a dungeon which, from its loathsomeness, bore the name of "the foul thief's pit," and never heard of more.[1] The same authority states, "that a servant of Sir James Balfour, parson of Fliske, who was at the murder of the King, was secretly killed, and in like manner buried, supposed, upon very lively presumptions, for utterance of some matter, either by remorse of conscience or other folly, that might tend to the whole discovery of the King's death." Of all the persons denounced in the placards, and enumerated by Lennox "as those he greatly suspected," no one except Bothwell was arraigned. Sir James Balfour, indeed, offered himself for trial on Bothwell's acquittal, but it was declared to be unnecessary, as no evidence had been produced against either, though all persons having anything to depose to that effect had been summoned by public proclamation fifteen days before the assize. A few weeks later, Sir James Balfour was loaded with hush-money in the shape of pensions, church-lands, and other immunities, by the Earl of Moray, though his share in the murder was notorious. No inquiry was ever made about any of the persons named in the placards, either by Moray, Lennox, or Mar, during their successive regencies. James Murray, the author of the placards and caricatures, was rewarded with a pension by the successful conspirators, whose cause he had so materially promoted. Immediately after Bothwell's acquittal, the Earl of Len-

[1] Drury to Cecil, April 19, 1567—Border Correspondence, inedited.

nox applied to the Queen for permission to leave Scotland, which was granted. He had also license to see the Prince, his grandson, and bid him farewell, which he did at Stirling Castle, in the presence of the Earl of Mar, to whose care he very earnestly commended him. Lennox departed from Scotland on the 17th of April, accompanied by twelve persons of his suite.

The tragic history of the unfortunate Darnley was meantime commemorated by some nameless English bard in a lyrical ballad, which was sung about the streets of London to a popular but now forgotten tune. The metre, though rugged, is nervous; and the poem is, under all the circumstances, too interesting a specimen of the literature of the period, not to form a pleasing addition to the present painful chapter of the biography of Mary Stuart:—

"*Feb.* 1567.

"A Doleful Ditty and a Sorrowful Sonnet of the Lord Darnley, some time King of Scots, Nephew to the Noble and Worthy King, King Henry the Eight, and is to be sung to the tune of *Black and Yellow*.[1]

"My pen and hand proceed to write,
A woeful tale to tell:
My pen it cannot half indite,
Alas! how it befell.
Woe worth the men that treason first,
This thing did take in hand;
Of all men's mouths they may be curst
Throughout this English land.
Woe worth, woe worth, woe worth them all,
Woe worth to them, I say;
Woe worth, woe worth, woe worth them all,
Woe worth to them alway.

"As it befell to Lord Darnley,
Whose friends they may all rue,
That ere he on Scotland ground,
Or any place therein knew.

[1] "Imprinted at London, by Thomas Gosson, dwelling in Paternoster Row, next the sign of the Castle."—[A broadside in English type, three columns.] I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Robert Chambers, Esq., for the communication of this curious contemporary poem, recently discovered by himself at Cambridge.

The Queen of Scots a letter sent,
With it a heart and ring,
Desiring him to come to her,
And she would make him king.

"He thought it was a courteous deed,
So noble a Queen as she
Would marry him, and make him King;
Thereto he did agree.
When first in Scotland that he went,
He was discreet and sage;
And when in hand he took to rule,
But twenty years of age.

"But listen now, and give good ear,
To hear what chance befell;
For, as the proverb old doth go,
Gold may be bought too well.
There dwelt a stranger in the court,
Signior David called by name,
He was the first that went about
This treason vile to frame.

"And Chamberlain he was to the Queen,
Who preferred him wondrous well,
As all the lords in court beheld,
Which caused their hearts to swell.
Against this David grudged the King,
A quarrel was picked for the *nonce;*
Within the chamber there was drawn
Twelve daggers all at once.

"Some of the lords took the King's part,
And some took *his certain;*
Two daggers he had at his heart,
And so was David slain.
And when the Queen heard of this news,
She sore began to weep,
And made a vow and oath certain,
That she did mean to keep—

"'That in a twelvemonth and a day
She would not be pleased be,
Because that David so was slain,
With such great cruelty.'
The twelvemonth and a day expired,
A meeting there should be;
By all the lords it was agreed
With great solemnity.

" 'At Rocksborough Castle then and there
This King and Queen should meet,
And be made friends as erst they were;'
Some lords the same did seek.
Three wights conspired the King's death,
Whose names are all well known:
For which, alas! the people in
The country made great moan.

" The wights which this treason began,
For to destroy the King,
They took with them gunpowder there,
The chamber they went in.
And to them close they shut the door,
For fear of being spied;
They strewed the powder round about
Full thick on every side.

" And thereon strewed rushes green,
To hide the powder withal,
Because they would not have it seen,
Nor nothing smelt at all.
The banquet then prepared is,
They sup and drink the wine;
The King, alas! knew not of this,
The which was wrought that time.

" And after supper they did talk,
To pass away the time;
And every man his fancy spake
As best did please his mind:
Some men with Signior David held;
The King then, in a rage,
Up to his chamber went straightway,
None with him but a page.

" And when he came the chamber in,
The page began to tell—
'You are betrayed, oh noble King,
For powder I do smell.
Oh flee from hence, haste you away,
And I on you will wait.'
The King that hearing, presently
Leapt out the window straight.

" One of them stood under the window,
And took him in his arm,
Saying, 'Who art thou? Oh man, fear not,
For thou shalt have no harm.'

'I am an Englishman,' quoth he,
'Of Scotland I am King;
King Henry once my uncle was,
Which was of England King.'

"Two of them took the King straightway,
And bound him hand and foot;
On a pear-tree in the orchard
This noble King they hanged.
And when the Queen heard of this news,
She sore wept for the King;
'Peace, madam,' quoth the Lord Jamie,
'You do but feign this thing.'

"'For why?' quoth she; 'though he were young,
None was more meet than he
To have worn the crown; for his lineage,
He came of high degree.
But now I wish my Chamberlain
Had hanged in his room,
So that the King alive had been
For to have worn the crown.'

"Thus hath this noble King also,
His life cost, as you hear;
Therefore I say, and will do still,
He did buy gold too dear.
God grant, good Lord, with heart I pray,
Our noble Queen to guide;
And grant that never traitors false
About her Highness bide."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary meets her Parliament—Her enactments—Returns to Seton—Ainslie's supper—Her nobles sign a bond engaging to marry her to Bothwell—Queen's guards mutiny in her presence for pay—Bothwell appeases the tumult—He hints his desire of wedding the Queen—Her discouraging reply—She goes to Stirling to see her babe—He has forgotten her—Frightened at her black dress—She courts him with an apple—His perversity—Malignant calumnies of her foes—Her last parting from her son—Her solemn charge to the Earl of Mar to keep him safely—She quits Stirling—Attacked with sudden illness on her journey—Bothwell's plot for her abduction known to the English government—Bothwell captures Queen Mary at Foulbriggs, near Edinburgh—Disperses her attendants—Hurries her with him to Dunbar—Boasts he will marry her whether she will or not.

QUEEN MARY rode in state from her palace of Holyrood to the Tolbooth to meet her Three Estates, assembled in Parliament, April 17. The crown was borne before her in the procession by the Earl of Argyll, in the absence of those rival princes of the blood, the Duke of Châtelherault and the Earl of Lennox, the sceptre by the Earl of Bothwell, and the sword-of-state by the Earl of Crawford. On their return the Earl of Huntley bore the crown, Argyll the sceptre, and Bothwell the sword.[1] Mary has been severely blamed for this arrangement by those who understood nothing of the laws of precedency, which are not affected by royal favour or caprice, but settled by the King-of-arms according to etiquettes of which he is con-

[1] Diurnal of Occurrents.

sidered the proper umpire. Bothwell, it is argued, ought not to have had a place in this procession, because he had been accused of the murder of Darnley; but he had voluntarily offered himself for trial, which had been publicly made in the justiciary court in the Tolbooth, where not a single tittle of evidence had been alleged against him, and he had been unanimously acquitted by a jury of his peers,—noblemen for the most part, of different factions, and of too high rank to be accused of having been tampered with. Under these circumstances, it would have been difficult to exclude him from the exercise of the privileges and functions of his high rank: as the principal minister of state, he occupied, of course, a distinguished place in the regal cavalcade. His acquittal was approved by the Three Estates in Parliament assembled, and he was confirmed in all his great state offices, whether hereditary or held during the pleasure of the Sovereign.[1] His trial is now known to have been collusive, through the contrivance of his accomplices in the murder, Lethington, Morton, and Moray. Although Moray was absent, he was strictly allied with the other two, his brother-in-law, Lord Lindsay of the Byres, Henry Balnaves, Makgill, and Sir John Bellenden, who sat as judges, were his creatures, by whom also his other brother-in-law, Argyll, was assisted and guided in the decision he pronounced on this occasion. If, therefore, those men violated their oaths, and basely betrayed the

[1] Tytler. In refutation of the oft-repeated statement that Mary bestowed the Abbey of Melrose on Bothwell, after he had been accused of her husband's murder, it is necessary to explain that Bothwell's grant of it had originally been obtained from Mary's mother in 1559, as a reward for his good services to her. During Moray's administration in 1561, it was transferred to the Earl of Arran. When Arran and Bothwell were both in prison for the conspiracy to abduct Mary in 1562, it was given to Michael Balfour, through the management of Lethington, who then obtained a share of the revenues. Balfour was charged with a pension, not to the Reformed minister of the parish, but to the Earl of Glencairn, one of the leaders of the Congregation. When Glencairn appeared in arms against Mary, in Moray's revolt against her marriage with Darnley, she bestowed on Bothwell his pension or abbey rent—all she could do towards the confirmation of her royal mother's grant,—and this was the great cause of Glencairn's hostility both against him and the Queen; for though Mary had frankly forgiven Glencairn for his past treasons, Bothwell would not relinquish this portion of the revenues of Melrose.—Chalmers's Life of Mary Stuart. Privy Seal Registers, xxxii. p. 56, and xxxiii., iv.

duties of their vocation, the blame ought surely to rest on them, not on the Queen, who, as a young woman, could not be sufficiently versed in the subtleties of the law to be able to instruct grey-haired senators of the Court of Justice, the Justice-General and Justice-Clerk of Scotland, in the readiest way of evading its proper administration. Even if she had possessed the power, which has been absurdly attributed to her, her principles were far different; for deeply, almost prophetically, had she been impressed with the observation of Cato, "Better is it that guilty men be not accused than acquitted."[1]

Four-and-twenty acts were passed in this short Parliament, for the most part repeals of forfeitures and adjustments of disputes between the great nobles, indicative of the barbarous manners of a distracted period. Accusations by placards were prohibited for the future;[2] and this was a just enactment, since no one could otherwise have been secure from the shafts of private malice.

In regard to religion, a most important act was passed, which renounced foreign jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters, and secured to all Christian subjects liberty to worship God according to their own consciences.[3] Thus the first act of universal toleration ever known in Europe emanated from the legislative wisdom and liberal mind of that much-vituperated Princess, Mary Stuart. She had, at the preceding Christmas, granted a settled provision to the Reformed ministers, whom the Lords of the Congregation, intent only on appropriating the fairest of the Church domains to themselves, had left to starve, or to work, like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, at mechanical crafts for their daily bread.

The business of the session being completed in five days, the Queen dismissed her Parliament on Saturday, April 19, and returned to Seton. Bothwell remained in Edinburgh that night to preside at a banquet, to which he had invited all the nobles who had attended the Convention of the Three Estates of Scotland. At this enter-

[1] See vol. iii. p. 299, Queens of Scotland.
[2] Acta Parliamentorum, ii. 547.
[3] Ibid.

tainment, which took place at a tavern kept by a person of the name of Ainslie, and is still spoken of in history as "Ainslie's Supper,"[1] a bond was executed, declaring, "That James Earl of Bothwell, Lord of Hailes, Crichton, and Liddesdale, Great Admiral of Scotland, and Lieutenant of all the Marches, being calumniated by malicious reports and divers placards, privily affixed on the Kirk of Edinburgh and other places, by his evil-willers and privy enemies, as art and part in the heinous murder of the King, late husband to the Queen's Majesty, and also by special letters sent to her Highness by the Earl of Lennox accused of the said crime, had submitted to an assize, and been found innocent of the same by certain noblemen his peers, and other barons of good reputation; and for farther trial of his innocence had offered to maintain it against all challengers by the law of arms, and omitted nothing that a nobleman of honour ought to do for perfect clearing of his accusation." After this preamble, it proceeds, "We, the undersigned, considering the ancientness and nobility of his house, the honourable and good service done by his predecessors, and specially himself, to our Sovereign, and the friendship that has so long persevered betwixt his house and every one of us; and seeing, withal, how all noblemen, being in reputation, honour, and credit with their Sovereign, are commonly subject to sustain, as well the vain bruits of the common people as the accusations and calumnies of their enemies, *envyful* of our place and vocation, which we, of our duty and friendship, are bound to repress and withstand.—We, therefore, oblige ourselves, upon our faith and honours, and truth of our bodies, as we are noblemen, and will answer to God, that in case hereafter any manner of persons shall happen to insist farther on the slander and calumniation of the said heinous murder, whereof ordinary justice has acquitted him, and for the which he has offered to do his devoir by the law of arms, we, and every one of us, ourselves, our kin, friends, assisters, and partakers, shall take true and plain part with him to the defence and mainte-

[1] Anderson's Collections. Goodall; Chalmers; Robertson; Laing; Tytler.

nance of his quarrel with our bodies, heritage, and goods, against his privy or public calumniators bypast or to come, or any others presuming anything in word or deed to his reproach."[1] In the sequel of this disgraceful instrument the subscribing parties, including eight earls, among whom was Mary's ex-Lord Chancellor the Earl of Morton, and the Earl of Huntley, by whom that highest legal office of the realm was then exercised, her brother-in-law the Earl of Argyll, Justice-General, and those professing champions of the true Evangile, Glencairn, Cassillis, and Rothes, together with eleven barons, peers of Parliament, scrupled not to unite in the flagrant declaration that they considered a married man a proper person to recommend their widowed Sovereign to accept for a husband, pledging themselves withal, "on their honour and fidelity, not only to further, advance, and set forward such marriage betwixt her Highness and the said noble lord"—these are their own words—"with our votes, fortification, and assistance; but in case any would presume, directly or indirectly, openly, or under whatsoever colour or pretence, to hinder, hold back, or disturb the said marriage, we shall, in that behalf, esteem, hold, and repute the hinderers, adversaries, or disturbers thereof, as our common enemies and evil-willers, and take part and fortify the said Earl to the said marriage, so far as it may please our Sovereign Lady to allow, and therein shall spend and bestow our lives and goods, against all that live or die, as we shall answer to God, upon our own fidelities and conscience; and in case we do in the contrary, never to have reputation or credit in no time thereafter, but to be accounted unworthy and faithless traitors."[2] The Earl of Eglinton, not liking the purport of this bond, slipped away to avoid signing it.

As there were the names of two honest men, the Lords Herries and Seton, among the subscribers, it can only

[1] Anderson's Collections. Goodall; Chalmers; Robertson; Laing; Tytler.

[2] Anderson's Collections, vol. i. p. 107-112. Subscribed at Edinburgh, April 19, 1567. In the copy of this bond, preserved in the Cottonian Library, which was made for Cecil by John Read, Buchanan's secretary, the name of the Earl of Moray stands foremost in the list of subscribers—

be conjectured that they must have drunk to excess, and signed it when under the temporary delirium of intoxication. The fact that Herries, from whatever cause it might be, did subscribe it, is a complete refutation of the following statement of Sir James Melville, often quoted by writers who rest the credibility of the charges against Mary Stuart on the fallacious notion of an irresistible passion for Bothwell: "The bruit began to rise that the Queen would marry the Earl of Bothwell, who had six months before married the Earl of Huntley's sister,[1] and would part with his own wife, whereat every good subject that loved the Queen's honour and the Prince's surety had sore hearts, and thought her Majesty would be dishonoured, and the Prince in danger to be cut off by him that had slain his father; but few or none durst speak in the contrary. Yet my Lord Herries, a worthy nobleman, came to Edinburgh, well accompanied, and told her Majesty what bruits were passing through the country of the Earl of Bothwell murdering the King, and how that she was to marry him; requesting her Majesty most humbly, upon his knees, 'to remember her honour and dignity, and the surety of the Prince, which would all be in danger of *tinsel* [being lost] if she married the said Earl;' with many other great persuasions to eschew such utter wreck and inconveniences as that would bring on. Her Majesty marvelled of such reports without purpose, and said 'there was no such thing in her mind.' He asked pardon, and 'prayed her to take his honest meaning in good part,' and took his leave immediately, fearing the Earl of Bothwell should get word thereof. He had fifty horse with him for the time, and caused his men buy as many new spears in Edinburgh, and

a fact that has given rise to an almost interminable dispute whether he really signed it or not. If he did, he must have affixed his signature to it before he left Edinburgh, and this would account for his name taking precedence of those of the Earls of Argyll and Huntley, which could not otherwise have been the case.

[1] Here is an instance of Sir James Melville's incorrectness. Bothwell was married to the Lady Jane Gordon, Feb. 20, 1565-6, and the wedding was kept with great pomp and festivity during five successive days at the Palace of Holyrood, the King and Queen, Darnley and Mary, making the banquets. — Diurnal of Occurrents. He had, therefore, been married upwards of a year.

rode home." Now, as Lord Herries did not ride home, but remained in Edinburgh, supported Bothwell, and united, as we have seen, with the other nobles in signing a bond engaging to assist him with his life, body, and goods, in accomplishing wedlock with the Queen, and was one of the witnesses of the contract that was executed on the eve of their fatal nuptials, Melville's story, however plausibly told and widely believed, is palpably opposed to the facts.[1]

The traitors who subscribed the bond for forcing the Queen into a marriage with their accomplice in the murder of her husband, subsequently pretended "that they were compelled to sign it by fear rather than liking, for that there were two hundred harquebussiers in the court, and about the chamber door where they supped, entirely at Bothwell's devotion." An excuse no less futile than cowardly; for even if Bothwell had been able to compel all the peers of Parliament assembled in Edinburgh to unite in an act alike disgraceful to themselves and injurious to the honour of their Queen, it would have been impossible for him to prevent them from uniting in protesting against such an outrage, if their signatures had really been obtained by compulsion. Why, then, were they all silent? A misdemeanour of so grave a nature, as coercing twenty of the great nobles and peers of Parliament into subscribing a bond, pledging themselves to procure a marriage between him, a married man, and their Sovereign, would not have been omitted among the catalogue of his offences in the act for his forfeiture, if he had really committed it. The falsehood of their story

[1] Melville's Memoirs. In reference to these discrepancies, it must be remembered that Sir James Melville, after he had abandoned the fallen fortunes of his royal mistress, found it necessary to adopt in some degree the tone of his new party — that party from which places, pensions, and preferments flowed. He did not proceed to the indecent lengths Buchanan has done, whose malignity defeats its own object by producing incredulity and disgust; but he has injured her cause far more by extolling her virtues and misrepresenting her conduct, expressing the affectionate sympathy of a devoted friend and servant, while he was assisting her calumniators and her foes. In addition to these Judas-like proceedings, he creates infinite confusion by transposing facts and inverting the proper chronology of events: for instance, the incident he relates at pages 115 and 116, as if before Mary's unhappy marriage with Bothwell, could not have occurred till afterwards, being the real cause of the split between Bothwell and Lethington, as will be shown at the proper place.

about the two hundred harquebussiers is very easily exposed; for these, being no other than the royal guards, were eight miles off that night on duty at Seton Castle, where the Queen was. Their behaviour the very next day will prove how little they were at the devotion either of Bothwell or her Majesty. "On Sunday night last the soldiers in the hall, in the presence of the Queen, began to mutiny for silver, demanding their pay: whereat the Earl of Bothwell was moved, and stepped to one of them, laying hands on him, to strike him; but the rest of the soldiers rescued him, so that the Earl was glad to let him go. So, after some grievous words of reprehension to one of the captains, who was charged to be the cause thereof, and promise made to satisfy the soldiers, they were appeased; whereupon the Queen commanded forthwith to give them four hundred crowns, which reached to two crowns a-man."[1] The amount paid shows the number of the men to have been two hundred. These, then, were the two hundred harquebussiers. It is to be observed, moreover, that the Earl of Morton, when tardy justice, fourteen years later, doomed him to pay the forfeit of his crime, abandoned the flimsy excuse of having signed the bond on compulsion, and without so much as mentioning the harquebussiers, acknowledged to the Presbyterian ministers Brand and Dury, by whom his confession was published, "that knowing Bothwell to be the murderer of the King, he scrupled not to subscribe a bond engaging that if any one should lay that murder to his charge he would assist him to defend himself, and face the matter out, and also thereafter recommended him in marriage to the Queen, as sundry others of the nobility did;"[2] falsely adding, "that they were charged thereto by the Queen's writ and command," which writ and command would, of course, have been published by them among their other documents, as the most important of all, had such an instrument ever existed. Bothwell undoubtedly told his guests "that it was the Queen's desire that they

[1] Sir William Drury to Sir William Cecil, April 24, 1567. Border Correspondence—State Paper Office MS., inedited.

[2] See Morton's Confession in Bannatyne's, Memorials and Laing's Appendix.

should all subscribe the bond," by which audacious declaration, it seems, he procured the signatures of several who might not otherwise have been induced to set their hands to it, nor would then, perhaps, had they been sober enough to see matters in their proper light. The fact that the Queen, on the eve of her fatal nuptials with Bothwell, executed a paper granting a general pardon to the nobles who had been guilty of the treasonable misdemeanour of signing the said bond,[1] proves that she had never exhorted them to such an act by her royal warrant.

The oft-repeated assertion that Mary was hurried by the madness of an irresistible passion for Bothwell into crimes opposed to her natural disposition, and inconsistent with the previous tenor of her life, first appears in a letter to the Earl of Bedford,[2] from one of the pardoned assassins of Riccio, Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, who affects to lament "the infatuation of the Queen," and enlarges "on the danger of the Prince," though aware that she had removed him out of Bothwell's reach, by placing him in Stirling Castle, in the hands of the Earl of Mar, hereditary tutor to the heir of the realm. He predicts the speedy marriage of the Queen with Bothwell, of whom he declares "that she had become so shamelessly enamoured that she had been heard to say 'that she cared not to lose France, England, and her own country for him, and would go with him to the world's end in a white petticoat rather than lose him.'" Kirkaldy solicits the assistance of Queen Elizabeth for himself and his friends, in which case the "murder of their Sovereign," as the conspirators now affected to style poor Darnley, the previous object of their contempt and hostility, "should not long remain unavenged." Those who have seen Bedford's encomiums on Kirkaldy, "as the most useful of his secret-service-men in the Scottish Court," and above all, Kirkaldy's own letters from time to time, both to Bedford and to Cecil, craving the wages of his treason against his native Sovereign, will perceive that his evil reports of her were matters

[1] Anderson's Collections.

[2] Dated the day after the nobles had signed the bond engaging to accomplish a marriage between their defenceless Sovereign and the Earl of Bothwell, April 20, 1567.—State Paper Office MS.

of merchandise bartered for English gold—records of his own baseness, not evidences of her guilt.

Rumours of Bothwell's projected divorce from his Countess had been circulated very soon after Darnley's murder. Through the whole of the months of March and April these are to be traced in Drury's news-letters to Cecil. Sometimes Lady Buccleuch is mentioned as the person likely to receive the reversion of his hand, or at least to put in her claim to it by right of a pre-contract, which it was supposed would be pleaded to invalidate his marriage with Lady Jane Gordon. Sometimes it was reported "that Lady Bothwell would not resign him, but protested 'she would die Countess of Bothwell.'" She appears, however, to have taken the matter very easily, as soon as her faithless husband had entered into a satisfactory arrangement with her about a suitable allowance for her sustentation. It was whispered that, besides being contracted to Lady Buccleuch, he had a previously-wedded wife in Norway—a noble and wealthy lady, whom he had deserted, but whose prior claim did and would render all other marriages illegal. The impropriety of his conduct with Lady Bothwell's waiting-woman, Bessie Crawford, was also matter of public notoriety. The following passage from the pen of one of Mary's political slanderers, the author of the libel entitled the "Oration," though really intended as a choice piece of satire on the depravity of her taste, demonstrates the incredibility of her imputed love for Bothwell: "For what was there in him that was of a woman of any honest countenance to be desired? Was there any gift of eloquence, or grace, or beauty, or virtue of mind, garnished with the benefits which we call of fortune? As for his eloquence and beauty, we need not make long tale of them, since they that have seen him can well remember his countenance, his gait, and the whole form of his body, how gay it was. They that have heard him are not ignorant of his rude utterance and blockishness."[1]

The original of this attractive portrait, whom Dargaud

[1] Anderson's Collections.

assures us was "minus an eye,"[1] had not the charm of novelty to recommend him to the favour of the loveliest and most refined Princess of the age, for he had been one of her lords-in-waiting during her first widowhood in France in 1561, when he was six years younger, and no impediment existed to her contracting matrimony with him, if she had felt any inclination to do so. It is a fact well worthy of attention that Mary, on the 11th of January 1561–2, honoured with her presence the nuptials of her brother, the Lord John of Coldingham, and Bothwell's sister, Lady Jane Hepburn, which were celebrated with great splendour at Crichton Castle.[2] The fêtes were prolonged for three days, during which time Mary, matronised by his widowed mother,[3] was Bothwell's guest. Both etiquette and royal courtesy rendered it proper for her Majesty to allow her host the honour of conducting her to the banquet and waiting on her there, attending on her at the games, and leading the dance with her, if so ungainly and awkward a person as he is represented to have been were skilled to tread a measure with his graceful Sovereign. At all events, it may be supposed that, at the marriage of his sister to her brother, opportunity might have been afforded for him to woo the young royal widow. The family connection established between them by that marriage placed them on more familiar terms than might otherwise have been the case. What more natural, if Bothwell had been a man likely to please the Queen, than that a courtship should have been commenced between them on an occasion so auspicious for love-making as a festive Scottish wedding in a lonely castle at Yule-tide, when all was mirth and social joy, and regal cares forgotten for a

[1] This loss was probably in consequence of the severe wound he received over the left eye, in his personal encounter with Cockburn of Ormiston, when, in November 1559, he tore the English gold from that patriotic laird.

[2] Chalmers' Memoir of Bothwell.

[3] Agnes Sinclair, a virtuous lady of the highest rank, whom his father, Earl Patrick, had divorced on some frivolous pretext, in the vain hope of marrying the beautiful queen-mother, Mary of Lorraine, and obtaining the regency of Scotland when Queen Mary was an infant. The divorced mother of Bothwell survived her profligate son, and died in extreme old age.

season? What reasonable objection could have been urged against her contracting matrimony with him at that time? Bothwell was one of the great territorialists of Scotland, Hereditary Lord-Admiral, Lord-Lieutenant of the Borders, a single man, and a Protestant. John Knox himself would have been willing to pronounce the bridal benediction of his feudal chief and the blooming Queen, in the hope that she would accompany her anti-Popish bridegroom to the preachings, learn from his stern lessons the monstrousness of female domination, and submit the sceptre and the sword of empire to a King-matrimonial of the Reformed faith. Now, what prevented Mary from realising this felicitous destiny, if she had affected the one-eyed stammering Bothwell? Why should she have inflicted on herself six years of delay, and involved herself in a labyrinth of guilt and inextricable trouble, to accomplish her union with a man whom she had been, till within the last year and a half, free to marry legally, and in the face of the whole world, if she had wished to do so? No reason has ever been alleged, nor can be given, for conduct so absurd. Why should she have inflicted upon him imprisonment, forfeiture of lands, outlawry, and exile, on an unverified accusation of his having devised a plot for her abduction in the spring of that same year? Above all, why should she have married Darnley herself, and presided at Bothwell's marriage with Lady Jane Gordon?—a match apparently of her own making, as both husband and wife were early eager to break their marriage bond. It must be remembered, too, that Bothwell's marriage to Lady Jane Gordon took place at a period when Darnley was doing all he could to alienate the Queen's affections by his importunity for the crown-matrimonial, and to disgust her by personal unkindness and neglect. Why then, if she had, as insisted upon by her calumniators, transferred her regard to Bothwell, should she have allowed the interposition of an insuperable bar to contracting wedlock with him (in the event of her becoming a widow), by sanctioning his marriage with her own near relative, and presiding at the nuptial fêtes? Her friendly feeling towards Bothwell's bride is testified by the following

entry in her privy-purse expenses, showing that she presented her with her wedding-dress:—

"February, 1566.

"12 ells of cloth-of-silver, to make a robe for the daughter of my Lady Huntley, for the day she was married to my Lord Bothwell."[1]

Three months later, Mary's affection for Lady Bothwell is further corroborated by the number of rich jewels she bequeathed to her, in the testamentary document lately discovered; among other things, a costly heart, formed of precious stones.[2] If she had left such a token of her regard to Bothwell, invidious inferences would undoubtedly have been drawn; very strong evidence in her favour may therefore surely be deduced from these testimonials of her friendship for his wife, whom her calumniators in the forged letters labour to make out the object of her jealous hatred.

Mary herself, in explanation of her feelings towards Bothwell, says:[3] "We thought his continuance in waiting upon us, and readiness to fulfil all our commandments, had proceeded only upon the acknowledging of his duty, being our born subject, without further hid respect, which moved us to make him the better *visage*, thinking nothing less than the same, being but an ordinary countenance to such noblemen as are found affectionate to our service, should encourage him, or give him boldness to look for any extraordinary favour at our hands. But he as well, as appeared since, making his profit of everything might serve his turn, *not discovering to ourself his intent*, or that he had any such purpose in head, was content to entertain our favour by his good outward behaviour and all means possible. In the mean time he went about, by practising with the noblemen secretly, to make them his friends, and to procure their consent to the furtherance of his intents, and so far proceeded by means with them before ever the same came to our knowledge, that, our whole Estates being here assembled in Parliament, he obtained a writing, subscribed with

[1] Treasury Records, General Register House, Edinburgh — inedited. Communicated by Joseph Robertson, Esq. [2] Ibid.

[3] Instructions to the Bishop of Dumblane—Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 36.

all their hands, wherein they not only granted their consents to our marriage with him; but also obliged themselves to set him forward thereto with their lives and goods, and to be enemies to all would disturb or impede the same, which letter he *purchased* [procured], giving them to understand 'that we were content therewith.' And the same being once obtained, he began afar off to discover his intention to us, and to essay if he might; by humble suit, purchase our goodwill; but finding our answer nothing correspondent to his desire, and casting before his eyes all doubts, that customably men use to revolve with themselves in semblable enterprises, the *outwardness* [untowardness] of our own mind, the persuasions which our friends or his unfriends might cast out for his hindrance, the change of their minds whose consent he had already obtained, with many other accidents which might occur to frustrate him of his expectation, he resolved with himself to follow up his good fortune, and all respects laid apart either to *tine* [lose] all in an hour, or to bring to pass that thing he had taken in hand; and so, resolving quickly to prosecute his deliberation, he suffered not the matter to sleep, but within four days thereafter, finding opportunity by reason we were past secretly towards Stirling to visit the Prince, our dearest son, in our returning he awaited us by the way, accompanied by a great force, and led us with all diligence to Dunbar. In what part we took that dealing, but specially how strange we found it of him, of whom we doubted less than of any subject we had, is easy to be imagined."

Thus we see, if Mary's clear and natural account is to be believed, that Bothwell presumed not to play the wooer to her till after he had obtained the signatures of a large majority of the peers of Scotland to a bond for accomplishing a marriage between her and him, and then proceeded with all the caution the dignity of her vocation and deportment rendered imperative. "He began afar off," she says, "to discover his intention to us, and to essay if he might, by humble suit, obtain our goodwill."[1] The time chosen by him must have been Sunday, April 20, at Seton,

[1] Instructions to the Bishop of Dumblane—Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 36.

the day after the bond was signed by his guests at Ainslie's tavern. He availed himself, in all probability, of the agitating moment when her feminine terrors had been excited, and the helplessness of her situation painfully forced on her attention by the mutiny of her guards, the two hundred harquebussiers, in whom her sole defence, independently of the Border force, which was wholly at his devotion, consisted. The advantage an artful man might make of such a situation may easily be imagined. It was an opportunity decidedly favourable for him to plead how much he could do in her defence, and that she, who might otherwise be left as a prey to the strongest, required the protection of an energetic husband. Yet "her answer corresponded nothing with his desire." How should it, seeing that he had never been the object of her choice when single, and he was now a married man, the husband of her cousin withal?—a circumstance which opposed an insuperable obstacle to her, as a member of the Church of Rome, contracting lawful wedlock with him, even after his marriage with Lady Jane Gordon should be dissolved.

Mary left Seton on Monday, April 21, on her way to Stirling, tarrying for despatch of business some hours at Edinburgh, where she signed several papers. Bothwell's audacity in having, however cautiously, discovered enough of his mind to his fair Sovereign to render it necessary for her to put a decided check on his presumption, may very well explain the reason why she did not accept his escort as High Sheriff of the Lothians as far as Callander, where she slept. She was attended by Lady Bothwell's brother, the Earl of Huntley her Lord Chancellor, Lethington, her Secretary of State, Sir James Melville, and some others of her household, and her ladies. Lord Livingstone convoyed her to Stirling on the Tuesday morning, April 22, where she slept that night. It is asserted by Buchanan, that "the Earl of Mar treated her with the singular disrespect of not allowing her to see the Prince her son except in his presence, and that he would not permit her to enter his nursery accompanied by more than two ladies, suspecting that it was her intention to repossess herself

of the royal infant by fraud or force." But although Mar was perfidiously engaged in the conspiracy for transferring her sceptre to the hand of the unconscious babe, whom, with fatal confidence in his integrity and devotion to her service, she had committed to his charge, there is no substantial reason to believe that he added insult to treachery. Mary continued in friendly correspondence with him long after she was in an English prison. Her letters prove that maternal anxiety for the security of her infant's life was the master passion of her desolate heart; and she reminds Mar "of his solemn promises to keep that precious one safely, and not permit any one to take him out of his hands." [1]

When she arrived at Stirling Castle, so far from any restrictions being imposed on her access to her son, he was immediately brought to her. Her eager approach to kiss and clasp her darling, frightened and offended him, and he angrily resisted her caresses. He had forgotten her during the month that had elapsed since their separation, and behaved as any other petulant babe of ten months old might, when suddenly introduced into the presence of strangers clad in sable array. His royal mother's appearance in her dule-weed, the enshrouding mourning-cloak, with its wide hood and hanging sleeves, and her widow's veil—a large square of black crape thrown over her head, with one corner brought low on the forehead, forming a point between the eyebrows, and the rest of its lugubrious drapery drawn together under the chin—must have been peculiarly alarming to an infant's eye. Homer, ever true to nature, thus describes Astyanax shrinking in terror from the paternal embrace of Hector, while wearing "his towering helmet black with shady plumes"—

> "The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
> Scared at the glittering casque and nodding crest.
> With conscious pleasure each fond parent smiled,
> And Hector hasted to relieve his child;
> The glittering morion from his brows unbound,
> And placed the beaming helmet on the ground."

[1] State Paper Office MS., inedited.

As Mary Stuart could not in like manner tranquillise her infant boy by divesting herself of her widow's hood and veil, and the rest of her sable panoply, she endeavoured to pacify him and court his regard by showing him an apple, which she took from her pocket and offered to him; but he was in too great a pet to take it, and she gave it to his nurse. Who would have imagined that this little episode in Mary's life, which depicts so pleasingly the natural instincts of fond maternity prompting the Queen to adopt the like means practised by matron or nurse of low degree to soothe her wayward babe and woo his smiles, by presenting an attractive object to his attention, could ever have been reported to her injury? On this foundation, however, and this alone, was based the atrocious tale that the object of Mary's visit to Stirling was to administer poison to her only child with her own hands. For the obvious purpose of gratifying the cruel policy of his own Court by circulating this slander, Sir William Drury, though himself a father, and of course familiar with the behaviour of babes and mothers, shamelessly wrote the following malignant version of the above pretty scene between Mary and her baby, to Sir William Cecil:—

"At the Queen's being last at Stirling, the Prince being brought to her, she offered to kiss him; but the Prince would not, but put her face away with his hand, and did to his strength scratch her. She took an apple out of her pocket and offered it, but it would not be received of him; but the nurse took it, and to a greyhound bitch having whelps it was thrown: she ate it; she and her whelps died presently!"[1] Who ever before heard of a greyhound and her sucking whelps eating apples? Drury well knew that all the armies in Europe could not have compelled them to do so; but the tale is as worthy of credit as the other charges against Mary derived from the same source. He proceeds to add—"A sugar loaf also for the Prince was brought thither at the same time, and left there for the Prince; but the Earl of Mar keeps the same. It is judged to be very evil compounded."[2] What honest heart burns not with indignation

[1] Drury to Cecil, May 20, 1567—State Paper MS., inedited. [2] Ibid.

as the system of treachery and cruel calumny by which the fall of Mary Stuart was accomplished is developed, and the iniquitous confederacy between the titled traitors in whom she placed her greatest trust and the English ministers, made plain? The innocence of the royal victim is manifested by the variety and number of the monstrous fictions they devised against her. Where actual guilt exists, falsehood is never resorted to in order to strengthen an accusation. If one dereliction from virtue could have been proved by credible witnesses, there would have been no occasion for these foul practices on the part of her adversaries. Anonymous letters, placards, caricatures, pasquinades, and lampoons are the base weapons of dastardly malignity, and are never admitted as evidence in a court of justice, since no one, not the most innocent person in the world, can be secure from the like methods of attack.

One thing is certain, that if Mary's conduct, either as the wife or widow of Darnley, had been in the slightest degree culpable, female testimony to that effect would not have been lacking; it never is on such occasions. But to the honour of womanhood be it repeated, that not one person of her own sex, from the wives of the Regents Moray and Mar down to the humblest serving-maid in any of her palaces, could be induced to corroborate the slanders of her successful foes, by deposing a word to her disadvantage. Hence the necessity of resorting to forgery, in order to give a fallacious colour to charges which it was found impossible to establish by any regular process of evidence.

On the day she arrived in Stirling, April 22, Mary addressed a short letter to the Papal nuncio (whom she still continued to excuse herself from receiving in Scotland), beseeching him "to keep her in the good graces of his Holiness, and not to allow any one to persuade him to the contrary of her devotion to the Catholic faith, protesting her intention to live and die in it, and her willingness to die for the good of the Church."[1] Yet she is asserted to have written no less than three passionate love-letters to the most uncompromising opponent of that church in Scot-

[1] Mary Stuart to the Bishop of Mondivi—Labanoff, vol. ii.

land, Bothwell, between the date of her arrival in Stirling on the evening of the 22d, and her abduction by him on the morning of the 24th. Those letters were, however, subsequently fabricated by the conspirators themselves, for the obvious purpose of supplying evidence of her affection for Bothwell, and to make it appear that his lawless seizure of her person was the result of a private agreement between her and him. Had such affection really existed, she would gladly have complied with the advice of her nobles, when they recommended him to her for a husband, and taken care that his matrimony with Lady Bothwell was nullified before any proposition of the kind was mentioned. It was because she would not listen to his overtures that Bothwell fell back on his original project of seizing and carrying her off to a strong fortress, and keeping her there till he had obtained by force that which he saw plainly he could not otherwise hope to win.

It is a startling fact, and one calculated to cast an entirely new light on the transaction, that the intended surprise and capture of the Scottish Queen, and her detention at Dunbar, were as well known beforehand to the English authorities at Berwick, and as duly communicated to Cecil, as the previous plot for the assassination of her secretary in her presence, together with the secret league of the conspirators for her deposition, life-long imprisonment, or death. Darnley was the dupe, the tool, and the victim of that confederacy—the more guilty Bothwell was to be so in this; but the destruction of Mary, and the virtual reduction of the realm of Scotland into a subsidiary province to England, were the leading objects of these intrigues. The personages by whom they were effected were like puppets on the political chessboard, unconsciously acting the parts assigned to them by the deep-seeing planners of the game.

Bothwell was not the confederate of the English Cabinet, but his wily accomplices in treason were; and it was from them that the information of his guilty project must have been obtained. "On Monday last," writes Drury, "the Queen took her journey to Stirling to see the Prince, and some say she would be glad to recover the Prince into her own

keeping again. This day she mindeth to return to Edinburgh or Dunbar. The Earl Bothwell hath gathered many of his friends, very well provided, some say to ride into Liddesdale; but there is feared some other purpose, which he intendeth, much different from that, *of the which I believe I shortly shall be able to advertise more certainly.* He hath furnished Dunbar Castle with all necessary provisions, as well of victuals as other thing forcible."[1] Thus we see Bothwell had fortified and prepared the stronghold, to which he intended to convey the Queen, with all the requisites for sustaining a siege—a contingency which he must have apprehended. These arrangements were not the work of an hour; and if made with the Queen's consent, as pretended by the conspirators, she would, of course, have had a perfect understanding of Bothwell's intentions, and the part it behoved herself to perform, in order to secure success. Her writing to him, therefore, as in Nos. V., VI., and VII. of the Silver-Casket Letters,[2] is clearly out of the question. If innocent, she could not have written in that strain; if guilty, she would not, because in that case there would have been no occasion to inquire the when, where, and how he was to meet her. She had seen Bothwell on the Sunday evening, perhaps on the Monday morning also; yet she is represented as writing to him from Stirling, where she only arrived on the Tuesday:—

"You had promised me that you would resolve all, and that ye would send me word every day what I should do. Ye have done nothing thereof. I advertised you well to take care of your false brother-in-law," [Huntley, her fast friend, by whom she was accompanied from Edinburgh]. "He came to me, and, without showing anything from you, told me 'that you had willed him to write to you what I should say, and where and when you should come to me, and what you should do touching him,' and thereupon has preached to me 'that it was a foolish enterprise, and that with mine honour I could never marry you, seeing that, being married, ye did carry me away; and that his folks would not suffer it, and that the Lords would unsay themselves, and would deny that they had said.' To be short, he is all contrary. I told him that, 'seeing I was come so far, if you did not withdraw yourself of yourself, that no persuasion, nor death itself, should make me fail of my promise.' As touching the place, you are too negligent, pardon me, to remit yourself thereof unto me. Choose it yourself, and send me word of it."

[1] State Paper Office M.S., inedited—Border Correspondence.
[2] Anderson's Collections, vol. ii. Laing's Appendix. Goodall.

Again she is feigned to write, but when the forger saith not—for dates, being particularly inconvenient, are carefully eschewed in these tissues of falsehood:—

"Of the place and the time I remit myself to your brother and to you. I will follow him, and fail in nothing of my part. And to be short, excuse yourself, and persuade them the most ye can that ye are constrained to make pursuit against your enemies. Ye shall say enough if the matter or ground do like you, and many fair words to Lethington."[1]

This sentence is artfully introduced by the forger for the obvious purpose of clearing Lethington from the suspicion that he was the deviser of the whole iniquity, both of the murder of Darnley, and Mary's subsequent betrayal into the toils of the ruffian Bothwell. But when, where, and how was this second letter written? Mary only tarried one night at Stirling (Tuesday April 22); yet no allusion is made to her immediate departure, while the desire expressed therein of being guided in her movements by her correspondent, infers an intention of waiting for his instructions, although the distance between Stirling and Edinburgh would prevent the possibility of the messenger's return with the desired communication before she started.

Queen Mary quitted Stirling Castle on the morning of Wednesday, April 23, unconscious that she was taking her last farewell of those royal bowers, where she had spent her happiest days, and that she was neither to behold them nor her only child again. When she had bestowed her parting embrace and blessing on that beloved object of her maternal solicitude, she delivered him into the hands of the Earl of Mar herself, and exacted at the same time from that nobleman a solemn pledge that he would guard his precious charge from every peril, and never give him up under any pretext without her consent.[2] There is something peculiarly interesting in the manner in which she recapitulates, in a letter from one of her English prisons to Mar himself, the substance of what she then said: "You know I have intrusted both Stirling Castle and my son to you, from the affiance I have ever had in you, and all belonging to you.

[1] No. VI., Anderson's Collections.

[2] Queen Mary to the Earl of Mar, from Bolton Castle—State Paper MSS. Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 255.

I pray you to have that care, both of the one and the other, that your own honour and the love and duty you owe to your country prescribes, and be vigilant and wary that you be not robbed of my son, either by fraud or force. Remember," she impressively adds, in her postscript, "that when I gave you my son as my dearest jewel, you promised me to guard him, and not to give him up without my consent; and this you have since repeated to me by your letters." [1] Yet it was from Mar, if we are to believe the report of Sir William Drury to Cecil, that the atrocious calumny of the royal mother's attempts to poison her infant boy emanated. The sudden alarming attack of illness which seized poor Mary on her journey, when she was about four miles from Stirling, and compelled her to enter a cottage by the wayside, to repose herself till her pain subsided sufficiently to allow her to proceed, is attributed by Buchanan to her fury and disappointment at not having succeeded in the barbarous design imputed to her by her cruel slanderers. If she had been addicted to the like uncharitable judgments, she might, with a greater show of probability, have asserted that her indisposition was caused by some deadly drug administered to her by the Earl of Mar; for it was a remarkable coincidence that Darnley had been taken ill in the like manner a mile or two out of Stirling, on his road to Glasgow—the infant heir of Scotland being at that time in Stirling Castle, where Mar was governor, and his nephew Moray at that time the all-powerful ruler of the Court. Both subsequently ruled Scotland under the shadow of that infant's name; both entered into secret treaties with the English Sovereign for the murder of their royal mistress.

The Queen, having been delayed and impeded by so severe an attack of illness in the very commencement of her journey, must have proceeded slowly, and could not have reached Linlithgow, where she was to pass the night, till late. It is natural to suppose that, being exhausted with the pain she had suffered, and the fatigue of passing so many hours in the saddle, she would, in compliance with the

[1] Queen Mary to the Earl of Mar, from Bolton Castle—State Paper MSS. Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 255.

advice of her physician and the entreaties of her ladies, have retired to bed immediately on her arrival, taken composing medicine, and endeavoured to obtain the repose of which she was in need. It is asserted, nevertheless, on the authority of that extravagant tissue of falsehood put forth by Moray under the name of the Second Confession of French Paris, that she had a private interview with the Laird of Ormiston, one of the murderers of her husband, and sent a letter to Bothwell by him that same night.

That the Laird of Ormiston was never questioned on the subject of this alleged correspondence between Mary and Bothwell, in which he was stated to have been employed as the bearer of their letters and credence, the night before her abduction, must be regarded as proof positive that nothing of the kind took place; for if such a fact could have been established by his evidence, no matter how extorted, it would have corroborated the assertion of the conspirators that she acted under the influence of a guilty passion for the murderer of her husband. But as the Confession of Ormiston is silent on that point, having been written down in the presence of the honest minister Brand,[1] who, though ranked with her foes, was too honourable a man to permit interpolations to be made for the purpose of defaming his hapless Sovereign, the charges of her complicity with Bothwell rest solely on the unverified assertions of the usurpers of her regal power, the credibility of the eight letters produced by Morton, and the so-called Second Confession of Nicholas Hubert, *alias* French Paris,[2] who is there made to confess delivering a letter to Bothwell a day before it could, according to its own showing, have been written, the 24th being plainly indicated by the allusion to the journey from Stirling "yesterday," [April 23d.] It will be necessary to quote this letter.

"My Lord,—Since my letter written, your brother-in-law [Huntley], that was, came to me very sad, and has asked me my counsel what he should do

[1] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials; also, Arnott's Appendix.

[2] It is to be remembered that Moray was too prudent to publish the said document till after he had hanged the unfortunate foreigner, in whose name it was published.

to-morrow, because there be many folks here, and among others the Earl of Sutherland, who would rather die, considering the good they have so lately received from me, than suffer me to be carried away, they conducting me; and that he feared there should some trouble happen of it of the other side, that it should be said that he were unthankful to have betrayed me. I told him he should have resolved with you upon all that, and that he should avoid, if he could, they that were most mistrusted. He has resolved to write to you by my advice."[1]

And here the usual discrepancy of falsehood confutes its own fictions, for the forger goes on to say—

"We had *yesterday* three hundred horse of his and Livingstone's. For the honour of God he accompanied rather with more than less, for that is my principal care. I go to write my despatch, and pray God to send us an happy interview shortly. I write in haste, to the end ye may be advertised in time."[2]

Thus we see a letter purporting to be written the day after the Queen had travelled from Stirling to Linlithgow —consequently on the 24th of April, the day of her abduction—expresses the greatest uncertainty as to what Bothwell's intentions were, which is incompatible with the assertion in Paris's confession, "that Bothwell very early on that morning made him the bearer both of a letter and a message to the Queen, telling her 'he would meet her the same day on the bridge.'" So the letter confutes the confession, and the confession the letter—affording a striking illustration of the old proverb, "that falsifiers require to have good memories."

The existence of a public register of daily events—an Edinburgh newspaper for instance—or any other journal conducted on honest principles, would have precluded the possibility of the system of misrepresentation by which Mary Stuart was victimised, from being successfully employed against her. Every page of her painful history is suggestive of the fact, that a free press, as the organ of truth, is no less the defence of the sovereign than the palladium of the people's rights.

Instead of being guarded by an escort of three hundred horsemen, as artfully insinuated in the seventh of the supposititious letters, Mary was so slenderly attended on her journey from Linlithgow to Edinburgh, on the fatal 24th

[1] Laing's Appendix. Goodall. [2] Ibid., No. VII.

of April, that her train did not exceed twelve persons. Bothwell, who had meantime armed and mounted a thousand of his followers, rode boldly out of the West Port of Edinburgh, at the head of this company,[1] apparently for the performance of his duty as High Sheriff, which required him to meet her Majesty at the verge of the county, to receive her with the customary honours due to the Sovereign, and conduct her to her palace of Holyrood. His real object was to overpower and capture her in some lonely part of the road. He had, if Sir William Drury's information on the subject be correct, conferred very early that morning with his brother-in-law Huntley, "with whom he did secretly break of his determination of the having the Queen to Dunbar, which in no respect Huntley would yield unto."[2] It is possible, therefore, that it was in consequence of being warned by Huntley that she was in danger of being ambushed on the road, Mary either started earlier than was anticipated, or pushed forward with such unwonted speed to get into Edinburgh, that Bothwell, instead of surprising her, as he had calculated, in a lonely part of the old Linlithgow road, which then ran in almost a straight line near the sea-coast, encountered her and her little train in the suburban hamlet anciently called Foulbriggs,[3] between Coltbridge and the West Port. If he had been ten minutes later she would have escaped him altogether, for she was actually within three-quarters of a mile of the Castle, and almost under the walls of Edinburgh; but near as she was to a place of refuge, it was impossible for her to reach it. A thousand horsemen, mailed and equipped with weapons of war, were treasonably interposed between her and the West Port. Resistance to such a force was out of the question: her attendants were overpowered and disarmed in a moment; and Bothwell, dashing forward, seized her bridle-rein, and, turning her horse's head, hurried her away with him to Dunbar as his prisoner. It is proper to verify this statement of the real place and manner of Mary

[1] Walter Goodall.

[2] Letter from Sir William Drury to Cecil — Border Correspondence. Inedited MS., State Paper Office.

[3] Acta Parliamentorum, vol. iii. pp. 5–10.

Stuart's capture, not merely by a marginal reference to an authority inaccessible to the great body of my readers, but by a quotation of the very words of the Act of Parliament, for the forfeiture of Bothwell and sixty-four of his accomplices, 1 James VI., which, after reciting his murder of "the late King Henry," proceeds in these words, "And also for their treasonable interception of the most noble person of our most illustrious mother, Mary Queen of Scots, on her way from Linlithgow to the town of Edinburgh, near the bridges vulgarly called Foul Briggis, besetting her with a thousand armed men, equipped in manner of war, in the month of April last."[1] The fullest, the most satisfactory and explicit testimony of the forcible nature of the royal victim's abduction follows in these emphatic words: "She suspecting no evil from any of her subjects, and least of all from the Earl of Bothwell, towards whom she had shown as great offices of liberality and benevolence as prince could show to good subject; he by force and violence treasonably seized her most noble person, put violent hands upon her, not permitting her to enter her own town of Edinburgh in peace, but carried her away that same night to the castle of Dunbar against her will, and there detained her, as his prisoner, for about twelve days."[2]

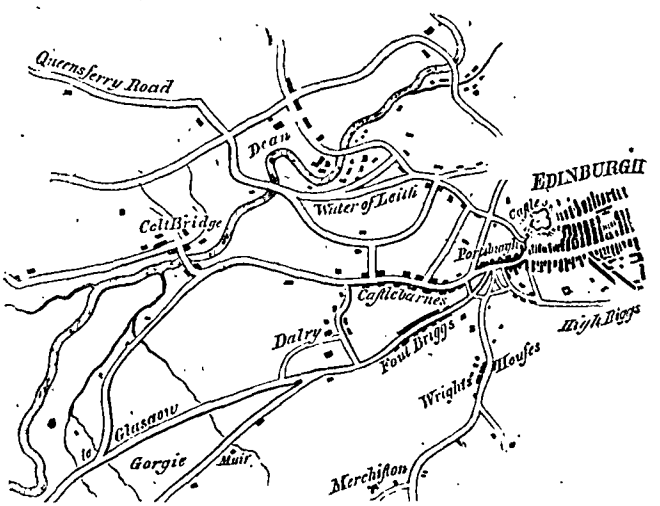
The suburb of Foulbriggs, specified by James Makgill, Clerk-Register to the Regent Moray's first Parliament, as the place where Bothwell perpetrated the treasonable misdemeanour of besetting and barring the passage of his Sovereign Lady Queen Mary into her own metropolis, and capturing her person, being now materially altered by the canal passing through it, and the erection of factories, warehouses, and streets, where all was at that time a desolate open waste, without the walls of Edinburgh, it becomes necessary to explain that the old name of Foulbriggs is now superseded by that of Fountainbridge, so called from the famous old well of pure water, which was destroyed only a few years ago. The name of Foulbriggs was derived from the Foulburn, a fetid stream formed from the off-

[1] Act of Parliament for Bothwell's forfeiture, Dec. 20, 1567, framed by James Makgill, Clerk-Register. First Parl. James VI., in the first year of Moray's regency.

[2] Ibid.

scourings of the streets and kennels of Edinburgh, which, descending into the low grounds, rendered them almost impassable after a succession of heavy rains.[1] The channel it formed near Dalry was arched over in two or three places for the convenience of passengers on the old Glasgow and Linlithgow road, which Queen Mary was traversing on her way to the West Port, when her evil genius, in the shape of Bothwell, met and prevailed against her. The spot where this encounter, so fatal to her, took place, must have been opposite to the premises now occupied by Mr Johnstone the builder, the site of the old bridge under which the Foulburn, which is now dammed up in a trough to work his saw-mill, formerly flowed into the park of Dalry, which it now enters by a covered channel.

In Rennie's plan for the canal between Glasgow and Edinburgh, dated 1797, the suburb now called Fountainbridge is thus mapped by its original and then familiar name of Foulbriggs:—



[1] This oral evidence of the old inhabitants of Edinburgh is confirmed by a deed (called in Scotland an instrument of sasine) dated 1711, in which a

A vast amount of falsehood is overthrown by the evidence of the parliamentary record defining the when, where, and how Mary's capture was effected by Bothwell. The Act was framed within seven months after the offence was perpetrated, and it behoved to be correct, because several persons assisted in that Parliament, as Huntley, Lethington, Sir James Melville, and others, who were not only present when the abduction was effected, but were carried away with their royal mistress as prisoners to Dunbar. The statute for Bothwell's forfeiture, reciting the overt treasons he had committed, was, moreover, proclaimed to the people of Edinburgh by the heralds, first from the window of the Tolbooth, where the Parliament then sat, then from the Mercat Cross and other public places, in the ears of hundreds who might actually have been eyewitnesses of the facts alleged.[1]

part of the lands of Dalry, or Brandsfield, is described as "bounded by *the Queen's highway to Foulbridge* and Saughtonhall on the south, by the high-road to Coltbridge on the north, and by the arable lands of Sir Alexander Brand of Brandsfield, on the west." The same deed, enumerating the privileges and pertinents attached to the lands, mentions "the liberty and privilege of the Foulbridge well." This description is repeated in subsequent deeds down to 1734.

[1] In the MS. Parliamentary Record, Dec. 20, 1567, opposite to the place where Bothwell is charged with seizing the Queen's person at Foulbriggs, is this note: "So it was neither at Almon Bridge, as Buchanan and his followers tell us, nor at Linlithgow Bridge, as others, but about half a mile from the gates of her own capital only." Cramond Bridge, Linlithgow Bridge, and the bridge over the Almond at Kirkliston, have each been named by historians as the scene of Mary's capture; but the Act of Parliament is the highest possible authority, and supersedes all others.

The following extract from the reply of Joseph Robertson, Esq., Searcher for Literary Purposes in Her Majesty's General Register Office, Edinburgh, to my queries as to the existence of any bridge on the Almond called Foulbriggs, clinches the matter: "We have searched our legal records for any place of the name of Foulbriggs in the county of Linlithgowshire, but find none. No place of that name exists, or ever existed, in that county. Foulbriggs must, therefore, be identified with the district of Edinburgh now called Fountainbridge."

I must here return my sincere acknowledgments to Her Majesty's Solicitor-General, James Craufurd, Esq., W. Patrick, Esq., W.S., and Joseph Robertson, Esq., for the valuable assistance they have rendered me in verifying this important point, by the communication of excerpts from various old deeds and conveyances descriptive of the situation and connected with property at Foulbriggs, *alias* Fountainbridge; and last, not least, my thanks must be offered to the Rev. Adam Duncan Tait, the learned minister of Kirkliston parish, for the friendly zeal in the cause of truth which induced him to take the trouble of ascertaining, by personal in-

The credibility of the charges against Mary Stuart—charges no less opposed to probability than inconsistent with the whole tenor of her life, and the holy calmness of her death—is grounded by her adversaries on her supposed collusion with Bothwell, when he made public seizure of her person and carried her off to Dunbar, she having, as they pretend, secretly encouraged and incited him to that measure. But the united voices of the Three Estates of Scotland assembled in Parliament, under an influence so hostile to her as to have robbed her of her crown and personal liberty, acquit her fully of either foreknowledge or suspicion of the designs of Bothwell.[1] "She suspected," declares the Act for his forfeiture, "no evil from any of her subjects, and least of all from him."[2] He was her Prime-Minister, her Lord-Admiral, Lieutenant of all the Borders, and High Sheriff of Edinburgh and the Lothians, whose bounden duty it was to meet and convoy her, and to defend her in case of danger with his *posse comitatus*. She "therefore suspected no evil;" and even if she had, resistance was impossible. It seems, withal, that he was provided with a plausible tale in reply to any remonstrance she might have offered when he took her by the bridle-rein, and turned her horse in a contrary direction

quiries, both from the landed proprietors and peasantry in Linlithgowshire, that no traces, either documentary, historical, or traditionary, existed of there having been any bridge or bridges on the Almond which could be identified with the Foulbriggs specified by the *Acta Parliamentorum* as the place where Bothwell treasonably beset Queen Mary, laid violent hands on her most noble person, and led her as his captive to Dunbar.

[1] Acta Parliamentorum, Dec. 19-20, 1567.

[2] The facts chronicled in the Parliamentary record, which are officially attested by the signature of James Makgill of Rankeillour, the Clerk-Register, demonstrate at once the falsehood of his patron the Earl of Moray's journal, of Buchanan's "Detection" and history of Mary's reign, of the absurd paper published by Moray under the name of "French Paris's Second Confession," and the supposititious letters produced by Morton for the defamation of the Queen. These are all refuted by the Act of Parliament, which asserts the treasonable constraint that was put on the Queen's will; and that Act, be it remembered, was framed, and, more than that, proclaimed by the heralds in the ears of the people, six months after the date assigned by Morton to the discovery of the letters which he produced as evidences of a guilty collusion and correspondence between the Queen and Bothwell. The Act of Parliament may be consulted in the Register House, Edinburgh, in the original Latin.

to that in which she was proceeding, "deceitfully assuring her that 'she was in imminent danger,' and beseeching her 'to allow him to provide for her personal safety by conducting her to one of his castles.'" [1]

Without the slightest consideration for the personal fatigue of his royal victim, who had been suffering so recently from a severe and alarming attack of illness the preceding day, on her journey from Stirling to Linlithgow, Bothwell hurried the captive Queen the same night to Dunbar, a weary distance of twenty miles, she having already ridden from Linlithgow nearly to the gates of Edinburgh.

On arriving at Dunbar, Bothwell dismissed his band with many thanks, and promises of grateful remembrance of the service they had rendered him, and requested them "to hold themselves in readiness till he should send for them again, which he thought would be soon." [2] Captain Blackadder, one of his followers, told Sir James Melville "that what had been done was with the Queen's consent;" but this proves nothing but that Bothwell, who had no wish to incur the pains and penalties of treason for his audacious capture and detention of his Sovereign, was desirous of having it so believed. He could not, however, refrain from boasting "that he would marry the Queen, who would or who would not—yea, whether she would herself or not." [3] He was in a position, unfortunately for her, to make his bravado good.

Meantime, the startling outcry that "the Queen's Highness had been treasonably *ombeset* [4] by the Earl of Bothwell and his military force, obstructed in her purpose of entering her own metropolis, and carried away with her Lord-Chancellor, Secretary of State, and Vice-Chamberlain, captive towards Dunbar," [5] created great excitement in the good town of Edinburgh. The common bell rang out

[1] "An Appeal to all Christian Princes in behalf of the Queen of Scotland"—Contemporary Italian Document in the Archives of the House of Medici.

[2] Drury to Cecil—State Paper MS.

[3] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

[4] See p. 336, note.

[5] Parliamentary Statute for Bothwell's forfeiture.

its clamorous tocsin, and her valiantly disposed citizens flew to arm themselves for her rescue. But their loyal purpose was prevented by the Provost and his fellow-traitors, for the gates were instantly shut, and the Castle guns pointed;[1] while the generous ardour of her champions was artfully checked by the base insinuation "that what had been done was with her Highness's own consent, for that she was more familiar with the Earl of Bothwell than stood with her honour."[2] Thus was the unfortunate Mary deprived of the timely succour that might have averted the horror of her impending fate.

[1] Diurnal of Occurrents. [2] Ibid.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary's detention by Bothwell at Dunbar Castle—Her utter helplessness—Lawless proceedings of Bothwell—He carries the Queen to Edinburgh—Compels her to go with him to the Castle—His collusive divorce from Lady Bothwell—He orders Craig to proclaim banns of marriage between the Queen and him—Craig refuses to do so without her warrant—Accuses Bothwell of coercing her—Queen signs the warrant—Banns published in St Giles's Church with protest—Nobles sign a second bond pledging themselves to accomplish Queen Mary's marriage with Bothwell—Her spirit succumbs—She condones his offences—Creates him Duke of Orkney—Signs a contract of marriage—Pardons her nobles for signing the bond—Is married to Bothwell by Protestant rites without the mass—Compulsory nature of the marriage—Queen continues to wear her dule-weeds—Her despair—Threatens to destroy herself—Bothwell carries her into public—His brutal tyranny—Progress of the conspiracy against her—Complicity of the English government—Queen Mary carried by Bothwell to Borthwick Castle—Castle beleaguered by the rebel Lords—Bothwell absconds—Queen resumes her regal character—She is personally insulted by some of the rebels—Her proclamation—Treachery of Sir James Balfour—Her midnight escape from Borthwick Castle—Loses her way—Is encountered by Bothwell and his servants—He carries her with him to Dunbar.

THE events of that painful epoch of Mary Stuart's personal history—her ten days' detention at Dunbar Castle—must be passed briefly over. The ruffian who had hurried her away to that almost impregnable fortress, without permitting so much as one of her ladies to accompany her, placed his own sister, the widow of the Lord John of Coldingham, about her person; thus was she devoid of female society or attendance, save those who were entirely at his devotion.

To the eternal disgrace of her nobles be it recorded, no effort was made by them for the enfranchisement of their liege lady; nor so much as a remonstrance offered to Bothwell on the subject of her detention, neither was there a single appeal addressed to her people urging them to take up arms for her rescue from the power of that audacious traitor. On the contrary, those who had been his accomplices in the murder of her consort, took the greatest pains to confirm his impudent assertion that she was his voluntary companion at Dunbar Castle. For the twofold purpose of convincing the Queen of the hopelessness of her position, and at the same time to give a plausible colour to his assertion that all he did was by her consent, Bothwell daringly assembled such of his confederates in her Cabinet and Council as he could rely on in a chamber at Dunbar Castle, where they agreed on an act of small importance, and entered their proceedings in the books of the Privy Council as a sederunt,[1] a trick that was easily arranged by the traitor Secretary of State, Lethington.

It was said that the banns of marriage between the Queen and Bothwell had been proclaimed in Oldhamstocks church by Parson Hepburn, one of Bothwell's vassal kinsmen;[2] many other reports, equally devoid of truth and probability, were industriously circulated both in Scotland and England. The person whose pen was most actively employed in the defamation of his hapless Sovereign was Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, who, as the secret-service-man of England,[3] and a member of the confederacy against Queen Mary, framed his letters to the Earl of Bedford for the purpose of misrepresenting her and furnishing pretexts to Queen Elizabeth for sending an invading army into Scotland, once more to lacerate the bosom of his native land. The following is a sample of his treason:—

"This Queen will never cease unto such time as she have wrecked all the honest men of this realm. She was minded to cause Bothwell to ravish her [carry her away], to the end that she may the sooner end the

[1] Bell's Life of Mary Queen of Scots, p. 97.
[2] Drury to Cecil—Border Correspondence.
[3] Drury to Cecil in April and May 1567—Border Correspondence.

marriage which she promised before she caused Bothwell murder her husband. There is many that would avenge the murder, but they fear your mistress. I am so suited to for to enterprise the revenge, that I must either take it in hand or maun leave the country. She minds hereafter to take the Prince out of the Earl of Mar's hands, and put him in his hands that murdered his father, as I writ in my last. I pray your lordship let me know what your mistress will do."[1]

He intimates in the conclusion that France was ready to take part with the confederate traitors against Mary, if England refused to do so. This letter is dated April 26, two days after the abduction of the Queen by Bothwell. That great criminal was permitted, meantime, to retain undisputed possession of his prey; suffice it to add that the lawless ruffian scrupled not to inflict on his royal captive the greatest outrage that can be offered to woman. The fact continues to be matter of controversy among historians, yet no circumstance in history was ever verified by so important a weight of evidence;[2] for it was attested in bonds of association, both private and public, in records of Council, and, above all, certified by the voice of the Three Estates of Scotland assembled in Parliament—not by Mary, but the shameless traitors who deprived her of her throne and liberty, under the flimsy pretence that she was the instigator of Bothwell's crimes. Yet the documents which contain her full acquittal were framed by themselves in language the most positive and explicit, and were published, with sound of trumpets, by the heralds at the Market Cross of Edinburgh from time to time, within the first seven months after the offences were perpetrated by Bothwell, and while the facts were fresh in the minds of men. All the vituperative declamations that were fulminated against her from the pulpits; all the forgeries and fictions that were subsequently devised for the purpose of defaming her, cannot obliterate from the Acts of the first Parliament of James VI. the declaration, that Queen Mary's abduction by Bothwell was forcible, her imprisonment and ruffianly treatment by him at Dunbar

[1] Letter from Laird of Grange to the Earl of Bedford—State Paper MS.

[2] Proclamation of Lords of Secret Council against Bothwell, Anderson's Collections; Letter to Throckmorton, July 20, 1567, in Stevenson's Illustrations; Maitland Miscellany; Act for Bothwell's forfeiture of the Lords in Moray's first Parliament, Dec. 20, 1567.

Castle real, and her marriage to him compulsory. Sir James Melville, who was at Dunbar Castle at the same time, declares "that the Queen could not but marry Bothwell after what had occurred against her will,"[1] using words too explicit to be repeated here, plainly indicating that it was among the erroneous notions of that age, that injuries of that nature might be repaired by marriage.

Mary's threats of vengeance were answered by a convincing proof of her utter helplessness, for Bothwell exultingly displayed the bond in which the majority of her peers and privy councillors had shamelessly pledged themselves to accomplish a marriage between her and him in despite of all who might pretend to oppose it. Astounded at the purport of this document and the sight of the signatures, Mary considered her case hopeless. Her own description of the predicament in which she found herself, presents, of course, a very modified picture of her misery, because written under the eye of the unscrupulous villain, at a time when, holding her still as his jealously guarded prisoner, he had acquired over her the authority of a husband; and she, considering the matter to be without remedy, was endeavouring, to use her own words, "to make the best of it."[2]

"Seeing ourself in his puissance, sequestrate from the company of all our servants and others, of whom we might ask counsel—yea, seeing *them* upon whose counsel and fidelity we had before depended, whose force ought and must maintain our authority, without whom, in a manner, we are nothing, (for what is a Prince without a people?) *beforehand* yielded to his desire" [meaning her nobles], "and so we, left alone, as it were, a prey to him—many things we revolved in our mind, but could never find an outgate"—any method of escape from his power, and the painful dilemma in which she was involved. "And yet," continues Mary, "gave he us little space to meditate with ourself, ever pressing us with continual and importune suit. In the end, when we saw

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs, p. 177.

[2] Instructions to Chisholm, Bishop of Dumblane, when sent by Bothwell to announce his marriage with her to the French Court.—Labanoff.

no *esperance* to be rid of him, never man in Scotland once, making any mean to procure our deliverance, for that it might appear by their hand-writes and the time that he had won them all, we were compelled to mitigate our displeasure, and began to think upon that he had propounded."

It is piteous to follow the unfortunate Princess through her melancholy detail of the difficulty she had experienced in maintaining her regal authority and the administration of her laws, the travail whereof she could no longer sustain in her own person, "being," she says, "already wearied and almost broken with the frequent uproars and rebellions raised since we came in Scotland. How we have been compelled to make four or five lieutenants at once in different parts of our realm, of whom the most part, abusing our authority, have, under colour of our authority, raised our subjects within their charge against ourself." [1] "Her people," she adds, "would neither allow her to contract a foreign marriage, nor yet to remain unmarried, and therefore was she compelled to consider the expediency of conforming herself to the declared wishes of her nobility, by accepting the consort they had recommended to her." Although writing after the fatal ceremony had past, she does not disguise that her consent to marry Bothwell was extorted under circumstances which neither delicacy, nor the relations into which she had been compelled to enter with him, permitted her to explain: "But as by a *bravade* in the beginning he had won the first point, so ceased he never, till, by persuasions and importune suit, accompanied not the less by force, he has finally driven us to end the work begun at such time and in such form as he thought might best serve his turn, wherein we cannot dissemble that he has used us otherways than we would have wished, or yet have deserved at his hand."

The Act of Parliament,[2] after specifying the nefarious crime in more explicit language, recites, "that after detaining Queen Mary's most noble person by force and violence twelve days, or thereabouts, at Dunbar Castle, Bothwell compelled her by fear, under circumstances such as might

[1] Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 40.

[2] 1 James VI., vol. iii. pp. 5-10.

befall the most courageous woman in the world, to promise that she would as soon as possible contract marriage with him: all which things," it goes on to declare, "were plotted and planned by the said Earl and the persons aforesaid of long time before, even before their foresaid conspiracy and parricide [the murder of Darnley], notwithstanding that at that same time James, Earl of Bothwell, was bound in marriage to an honourable lady, Janet Gordon, from whom not only was he not divorced, but no process of divorce was begun."

No sooner, however, had Bothwell got the Queen inextricably in his fangs, than he hurried forward the process of divorce between himself and his Countess. That lady, being no less eager to be released from him, brought her case before the commissioners of the Presbyterian court of Kirk-Sessions, on the ground of his breach of nuptial vows with Bessie Crawford, one of her female servants; and having proved her wrongs, obtained sentence of divorce, with liberty for both parties to contract wedlock with whomsoever they pleased.[1] As Bothwell had entered into a previous agreement with his Countess, whom he endowed with the whole of the village and lands of Nether Hailes, as the reward of her compliance in bringing the suit for a divorce, he would never have allowed it to be brought on grounds so disreputable to him, if he could have flattered himself with the idea that the Queen cherished the slightest personal regard for him. His own suit was brought in the consistorial court of the Archbishop of St Andrews, and the objection urged was relation within the forbidden degrees.[2]

[1] Diurnal of Occurrents.

[2] The original process of divorce betwixt the Earl Bothwell and his Countess is preserved among the papers of his Grace the Duke of Hamilton. Their too near relationship, both by father and mother, is fairly exhibited, and the fact verified by divers witnesses.—Catalogue of Hamilton Papers, 21. This loophole for creeping out of the matrimonial noose would not have existed, if Bothwell had not sturdily resisted the Queen's wish that his marriage with their mutual kinswoman should be solemnised according to the rites of the Church of Rome. In that case the Pope's dispensation must have been procured, and nothing could have impugned the validity of the contract in a Roman Catholic court. That Mary Stuart would have had Bothwell bound in a life-long plight to Lady Jane Gordon is a convincing proof that she had no improper regard for him herself, since,

Sentence of divorce being pronounced in both the Protestant and Roman Catholic courts, and Bothwell, perceiving that no sort of demonstration was made either by gentles or commons for the liberation of the Queen, brought her, under a strong guard of his armed followers, into Edinburgh on the 6th of May.[1] When they entered the town, his men, fearing to be hereafter brought under the penalties of treason for assisting in the coercion of their Sovereign, threw away their spears, whereupon the Queen would fain have proceeded to her own palace of Holyrood; but Bothwell, promptly seizing her bridle, turned her horse's head, and led her as his captive to the Castle, which, being in the keeping of his confederate, Sir James Balfour, was at his devotion. They entered under a salvo of artillery, but poor Mary found herself still a captive,[2] subjected to the like restraint in which she had been held at Dunbar, her chamber doors being vigilantly guarded by armed men, and not one faithful friend or counsellor permitted to have access to her.[3]

Sir James Melville, indeed, affirms that he found means to deliver a letter to her from Thomas Bishop, one of her English agents, warning her against a marriage with Bothwell, "who was publicly spoken against in England as the murderer of her husband; and assuring her that, in case she married him, she would lose the favour of God, and the

as a member of the Church of Rome, she could not legally contract matrimony with him during the existence of his wife.

[1] It is worthy of observation how often Mary's most unscrupulous slanderers contradict their own falsehoods. Thus Buchanan, after asserting "that she was carried to Dunbar by her own contrivance, and was well pleased to remain," goes on to state, "that if she were married while a prisoner, the marriage might not be accounted good, and so easily dissolved;" and proceeds to add, "Bothwell gathered his friends and dependants together, resolving to bring back the Queen to Edinburgh, that so, under *a vain show of her liberty*, he might determine of their marriage at his pleasure. His attendants were all armed, and as they were on their journey a fear seized on many of them, lest, one time or other, it might turn to their prejudice to hold the Queen still a prisoner. Upon this scruple they threw away all their spears, and so, in a seeming more peaceable posture, they brought her to the Castle of Edinburgh, which was then in Bothwell's power."—Hist. Scot., vol. ii. pp. 332-333.

[2] Diurnal of Occurrents. Tytler; Bell; Buchanan.

[3] Proclamation of the Rebel Lords, July 20—Anderson's Col. Act of Parliament for Bothwell's forfeiture, 1st of James VI., December 20, 1567.

kingdoms of England, Ireland, and Scotland." It seems scarcely probable that Thomas Bishop, whose conduct towards Lady Lennox had been very base, and who had hitherto acted the part of a spy and informer to Queen Elizabeth, should have given such faithful counsel to Mary Stuart; neither is it easy to reconcile what follows with the fact that Melville was one of the witnesses and guests at the marriage between Mary and Bothwell. "After that her Majesty had read the said writing," he proceeds, "she gave it to me again without any more speech, but called upon the Secretary, Lethington, and said to him 'that I had shown her a strange writing,' willing him also to see it. He asked what it could be.[1] She said, 'A device of his own, tending only to the wreck of the Earl of Bothwell.' He took me by the hand, and drew me apart to see the said writing; and when he had read it, he asked 'what was in my mind?' and said, 'so soon as the Earl of Bothwell gets word, as I fear he shall, he will not fail to slay you.' I said 'it was a sore matter to see that good Princess run to utter wreck, and nobody to forewarn her.' He said 'that I had done more honestly than wisely. I pray you,' said he, 'retire you with diligence, before the Earl of Bothwell come up from his dinner.' Her Majesty told him at the first meeting, with a condition that he should not do me any harm; but I was flown, and was sought, and could not be found, till my lord's fury was slaked; for I was advertised that there was nothing but slaughter in case I had been gotten. Whereat her Majesty was miscontent, and told him 'that he would cause her be left of all her servants.'[2] Then he promised 'that he would do me no harm,' whereof I being advertised, past again to her Majesty, and showed that she made me never such a fault as to think I had invented the said letter, assuring her, 'that it came from the said Thomas Bishop; and albeit it had not come from him, I was minded of duty to have said my opinion thereanent with all reverence and humility.' She said 'matters were not that far agaitward, but she had no will to enter into the terms.'"[3] Small choice, however, had

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

Mary in the matter. A number of her nobles met together in a chamber of the Palace, after her return to Edinburgh, and there subscribed a second bond, declaring "that the marriage between the Queen and the Earl of Bothwell was very meet, he being very well friended in the Lothians and on the Borders, to see good rule kept."[1] The fact that these men were for the most part in a secret league with the English faction, for dethroning the Queen immediately after the accomplishment of that abhorrent wedlock, to which they were thus basely urging her, increases the turpitude of their conduct. The correspondence between Drury and Cecil affords abundant evidence of their confederacy with the English government for the accomplishment of the revolution of which that marriage was to be the pretext.[2]

Bothwell, whose furious passions and blind ambition rendered him the instrument of their cruel coalition for the ruin of his hapless Sovereign, now drove matters forward with a high hand. The sentence of the Consistorial Court nullifying his marriage was pronounced May 7th. On the 8th he sent a requisition, "for purpose of matrimony, to be proclaimed between himself and the Queen in St Giles's Church." John Cairnis, the reader, whose duty it was to make proclamation of banns, positively refused to do so. Bothwell then sent his kinsman, Thomas Hepburn, to Mr Craig, the minister, enjoining him to make the proclamation himself. Craig inquired of Hepburn "if he had brought the Queen's warrant for that purpose?"[3] Hepburn was compelled to acknowledge "that he had not," and Craig very properly declined performing Bothwell's requisition without her express command. "I plainly refused," says Craig, "because he had not her handwriting, and also the constant bruit that my lord had both ravished her and kept her in captivity."[4] The next day Sir John Bellenden, the Justice-Clerk, brought a paper in the form

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[2] Inedited Border Correspondence—State Paper Office MSS.
[3] Spotiswood.
[4] Declaration of Mr John Craig—Anderson's Collections, ii. 219.

of a letter, bearing the Queen's subscription, to the effect that she was not in captivity, and willed him to proceed to the publication.[1]

How or in what manner Mary's signature was obtained is bootless to inquire. The fact that her handwriting could not previously be produced by Bothwell or his creatures for that purpose, affords convincing proof that her consent to the preliminary step for this marriage was not extorted till the 9th of May. On that day, being Friday, Craig made the publication, with a solemn protest against the marriage, as both unsuitable for the Sovereign and her people; calling on God and that congregation to bear witness to his reluctance to become in any way instrumental therein. His voice was, however, the only one that was publicly uplifted against it. Bothwell, in a furious passion, summoned Craig before the Council, where he, and not the Queen, presided; and fiercely called the courageous minister to account for his protest. Craig, no whit intimidated by his blustering, maintained that he had only done his duty, boldly laid down the law on adultery and rape to him; and also observed "that the suspicion of the King's murder, which his trial had not removed, would be confirmed by his present proceedings;" and assured him "that, if he were compelled to the publication on the ensuing Sunday, he should speak his mind still more plainly in the face of the congregation." Bothwell promised him a rope for his reward;[2] but Craig was as good as his word, and at the second publication, which was made Sunday 11th, spoke in still stronger terms of the impropriety of the marriage, and, indeed, its illegality, since, as he plainly affirmed, "in cases where a divorce was made on proof of adultery, no second marriage was allowed." In conclusion he said, "And here I also will all men to cease from setting up papers, and from secret whisperings—let them that have aught to say, say it openly, or else hold their peace." Silence appearing to give consent, Bothwell next proceeded to drag his now

[1] Declaration of Mr John Craig—Anderson's Collections, ii. 219.
[2] Drury to Cecil, May 26, 1578—State Paper Office MS.

passive victim to the Court of Session, in the Tolbooth, where she went through the farce of declaring herself at liberty, and under no personal restraint, adding, "that although she had been highly offended and commoved with the Earl of Bothwell for his late proceedings, she had now forgiven him, in consideration of the many services he had rendered her, and intended to promote him to further honours."[1] Proclamation of their banns having then publicly been made twice in St Giles's Church without interruption, this followed as a matter of course.

After the Queen had submitted to this requisition of Bothwell, he conducted her to Holyrood Abbey, and went himself to the lodgings of Du Croc, the French ambassador, where he spent four hours in trying to persuade him to countenance his proceedings by being present at his marriage. Du Croc firmly refused to do so, and nothing could shake his resolution.[2] At five o'clock in the afternoon, that same day, the ceremonial of creating Bothwell Duke of Orkney was performed in Holyrood Abbey. The Earl of Rothes carried the sword of state before the Queen, the Earl of Crawford the sceptre, and the Earl of Huntley the crown; the heralds, in coat armour, also passing in procession before her, the Earl of Bothwell, with others, following. When the Queen had been placed on her throne, under the cloth of estate, the heralds went out with Bothwell, and presently returned in procession, followed by the Laird of Skirling bearing a blue banner, with the Earl of Bothwell's arms. Then came Bothwell himself in a red robe furred, led between two earls, and there was created Duke of Orkney. The Queen complied with the custom on such occasions, by placing his ducal coronet on his head with her own hands.[3] She then

[1] Records of the Court of Session. [2] Drury to Cecil, May 16.

[3] Ibid., May 14—State Paper Office MSS., inedited. The dukedom of Orkney was evidently chosen for himself by Bothwell, because of his maternal descent from that powerful chief, William St Clair, son of Waldeme, Count de St Clair, by Margaret, daughter of Richard II. Duke of Normandy, who settled in Scotland in the reign of Malcolm Canmore, and among his numerous titles bore that of Prince of Orkney. Possibly Bothwell considered himself, in right of his mother, Agnes Sinclair, one of the great inheritrixes of that illustrious and royally-descended house, the right-

conferred the honour of knighthood on Sir James Colborne of Langton, Patrick Whitlaw, Patrick Hepburn, and Robert Arniston of Teviotdale, and accorded her pardon to young Kerr of Cessford, who had been in close confinement for several months in Edinburgh Castle for the murder of his father-in-law, the Abbot of Kelso.[1]

Mary's conduct with regard to Bothwell has been, from first to last, so cruelly and artfully misrepresented by her political libellers and their mistaken copyists, that, in order to give a correct view of the circumstances under which this fatal marriage was concluded, it will be necessary to revert once more to the recital of Bothwell's misdemeanours in the Act of Parliament for his forfeiture, 1 James VI., an authority which cannot be impugned, and which settles the dispute as to its being a matter of choice on her part: "And in his nefarious and treasonable crimes and purposes continuing and persevering, he kept and detained the most noble person of our said dearest mother in firm custody and durance, by force and *masterful* hand of his armed friends and dependants, until the sixth day of May last past; on which day, still accompanied by a great number of armed men, he carried her to the Castle of Edinburgh, which was then in his power, and there imprisoned her, and compelled her to remain until the eleventh day of the said month; on which day, still accompanied by a great number of armed men, that he might better colour his treasonable and nefarious crimes and purposes, he carried her to our palace of Holy Rood, and so within four days compelled her to contract marriage with him."[2]

The coarseness of Bothwell's manners could not have been otherwise than revolting to a Princess elegant and refined as Mary, and whose estimate of what the deportment of a nobleman ought to be had been formed in the

ful sovereign of that principality, which, however, had been always a bone of contention between Scotland and Denmark. At the marriage of James III. and Margaret of Denmark, its peaceful possession was ceded by her country as a part of her portion; but it was still held of Denmark till the marriage of James VI. and Anne of Denmark.

[1] The Abbot was the Protestant impropriétor of the ecclesiastical domains.

[2] Acta Parliamentorum, vol. iii. pp. 5-10.

most polished court in Europe. It is certain that, on the very eve of their nuptials, she avoided his society; for when Sir James Melville returned to Holyrood, he found the newly-created Duke seated at supper with Huntley, the Justice-Clerk, and some others, and not with her. "He bade me," continues Melville, "sit down and sup with him. I said I 'had already supped.' Then he called for a cup of wine, and drank to me, that I might pledge him like a Dutchman, bidding me drink it out, and grow fat; 'for,' said he, 'the zeal of the commonwealth has eaten you up, and made you so lean.'"[1] After this profane use of Scripture, he began to talk so indelicately that Melville left him in disgust, and went up-stairs to the Queen, who appeared very glad to see him.[2]

Mary, notwithstanding all that had passed, ought rather to have died than submitted to the degradation of entering into conjugal relations with Bothwell; but, broken in health and spirits, deceived, betrayed, and unnerved by the dreadful events of the last few months, she yielded at last to it as a dire necessity.

The contract of marriage, the only genuine one between her and Bothwell ever signed by her, was executed on the evening of the 14th of May. Then, and not till then, she was prevailed on to grant a formal pardon to the noblemen for the misdemeanour they had committed in subscribing the bond of association at Ainslie's supper, which had been the means of bringing her into a predicament so terrible.[3] At four o'clock the next morning, May 15th, Mary was married in her dule-weeds to Bothwell by the Protestant Bishop of Orkney, assisted by Mr Craig. Her reluctance is testified by the fact that none of the rites which she considered essential to a true marriage were used, nor was it sanctified to her by the benediction of a priest of her own Church.[4] Sir James Melville, who was present, and could not be mistaken, says,

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs. [2] Ibid.

[3] Anderson; Goodall; Labanoff.

[4] The Diurnal of Occurrents and Birrel's Diary both attest the fact that the marriage was made, not with the mass, but with the preachings. Spotiswood, too, the son of the Superintendent of Lothian, and no mean autho-

"The marriage was made in the palace of Holyrood House, at a preaching by Adam Bothwell, Bishop of Orkney, in the great hall where the Council uses to sit, and not in the chapel at the mass, as was the King's marriage," —meaning her marriage with Darnley.

Let us now proceed to show in what terms Mary herself, when out of the power of her brutal oppressor, spoke of this marriage to the Pope, to whom, as the head of her Church, she would not have dared to make a false statement. "Tell to his Holiness,"[1] writes she to her accredited envoy, "the grief we suffered when we were made prisoner by one of our subjects, the Earl of Bothwell, and led as prisoner with the Earl of Huntley the Chancellor, and the nobleman our Secretary, together to the Castle of Dunbar, and after to the Castle of Edinburgh, where we were detained against our will in the hands of the said Earl of Bothwell, until such time as he had procured a pretended divorce between

rity in ecclesiastical matters, confirms the positive statement of Sir James Melville and many others on this point. As it was a circumstance plainly denoting that the Queen regarded the plight as compulsory and illegal, there was of course an attempt on the part of her calumniators to deprive her, by falsehood, of the strong argument of her repugnance to be derived from her conduct on this occasion, and it is therefore affirmed in Moray's journal, "that she was married according to both sorts of the Kirks, reformed and unreformed." The continuator of Knox sneers at the profligate time-serving Bishop of Orkney's performing the rite. Buchanan testifies, as plainly as he can, to the irregularity of his proceedings by the general observation, "There were some public ceremonies performed after a mock kind of manner." Now, had there been a Papistical ceremonial, both these writers would have mentioned it to the reproach of the officiating priests and their Popish Queen. Monsieur Mignet asserts "that the ceremony was performed according to the Catholic ritual, and afterwards in the fashion of the Protestant Church;" but this is one among the numerous instances of the incorrectness of that gentleman, for the MS. letter of Sir William Drury to Sir William Cecil, to which he refers as his authority, gives a very different account of the matter, as he would have seen if he had taken the trouble of examining the original document, or had obtained a correct transcript and translation. The passage is as follows: "It may please your honour to be advertised, that yesterday, being the 15th of this present, at 4 hours in the morning, this Queen was married with the Duke of Orkney, the witnesses being few. The same was in the Chamber of Presence, with a sermon, and *not with a mass*, although the day before it was judged she would have one, and thereof grew at the Bishop of Ross's some speech. The Bishop of Orkney and Mr Craig were present, and had to do."—May 16, 1567; State Paper Office MS. Border Correspondence.

[1] Labanoff—Lettres de Marie Stuart, vol. iii. p. 221-231, from Secret Archives of the Vatican at Rome, entitled "Instructions given by Marie Stuart to Robert Radolfi, sent to the Pope."

him and the sister of the said Lord of Huntley, his wife, our near relative; and we were constrained to yield our consent, yet against our will, to him. Therefore your Holiness is supplicated to take order on this, that we are made quit of the said indignity by means of a process at Rome, and commission sent to Scotland, to the bishops and other Catholic judges, as to your Holiness seemeth best, as will be more particularly understood at length by the memorial which will be given in by the Bishop of Ross."

Queen Mary's demeanour at the accomplishment of these unhallowed nuptials testified how abhorrent they were to her. There was no display of royal pomp, no pageantry nor public shows to propitiate the people. The pipes at the Market Cross flowed not with wine, for loyal lieges of all degrees to drink "health to the royal bride and her gudeman," as on former occasions. Neither banqueting, music, nor acclamations were heard, nor was there any dancing. She issued not orders for bonfires to be kindled on Arthur's Seat, the Calton Hill, and other high places through the realm, as on the festive night of that day of gladness, when her marriage with her secretly-wedded consort, the beloved Darnley, was solemnised in "the face of Holy Kirk." All was silent and lugubrious without the Palace, and miserable within. "At this marriage," notes the Diurnal of Occurrents, "there were neither pleasures nor pastimes, as are wont to be used when princes are married."

Mary persisted in wearing her widow's weeds for Darnley several days after she had become the woeful bride of Bothwell, and, though she was at last compelled "to shake them off,"[1] and resume her rich array and jewels, the mournful alteration in her appearance was observed by every one. "The opinion of divers is," writes Drury to Cecil, "that the Queen is the most changed woman in face that in so little time, without extremity of sickness, they have seen."[2] It was the outward and visible sign of the intensity of that internal anguish which rendered life intolerable to her.

The day after her marriage with Bothwell, Mary sent for Du Croc, who had refused to be present at it, but

[1] Drury to Cecil, May 20, 1567—State Paper MS., inedited. [2] Ibid.

kindly came to see how it was with her. He was struck with the strangeness of her manner to her bridegroom, which she perceiving, told him, and this in Bothwell's presence too, "that he must not be surprised if he saw her sorrowful, for she could not rejoice, nor ever should again. All she desired was death."[1] The next day, being alone in her cabinet with Bothwell, she was heard by those in her privy chamber to scream and threaten self-destruction.[2] Arthur Erskine, the captain of her guard, reported also "that she called for a knife to stab herself, 'or else,' said she, 'I shall drown myself.'"[3]

Those who were about her told Du Croc, "that, unless God aided, it was feared she would become desperate. I have counselled and comforted her all I can," observes that statesman, "these three times I have seen her." His letter is dated May 18th, only three days after her marriage with Bothwell. Can any one believe, after such evidence of her uncontrollable despair and misery, that she had rushed into it voluntarily, and with headlong haste, under the intoxicating influence of a resistless passion? Little are those who still waste words in maintaining a paradox so absurd, read in the constitution of the female heart. Small must have been their experience in the natural language of the affections, not to understand the difference between the symptoms of woman's love and the vehement indications of her abhorrence.

"Her husband he will not continue long," predicts Du Croc, after communicating to the Queen-mother of France the hatred of the people to Bothwell, and the secret confederacy against him of the very nobles who had pledged themselves to accomplish that most revolting wedlock between the profligate ruffian and their hapless Sovereign. "I believe," adds Du Croc, "that he will write to your Majesty by the Bishop of Dumblane: you ought not to make him any answer." It was by the Bishop of Dumblane Mary wrote, or rather subscribed, under Bothwell's constraint, a long explanation of the causes

[1] Letter from Du Croc to the Queen-mother of France, May 18, 1567—Teulet's Collections. [2] Ibid. [3] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

which had induced her to enter into this unhappy marriage, telling the truth, but not the whole truth. "The event," observes she to her faithful servant, the Archbishop of Glasgow, "indeed is strange, and otherwise than we wot you would have looked for; but as it has succeeded, we maun make the best of it, and so for our respect maun all that loves us, of which number we have ever thought, and yet does specially esteem you."[1] Bothwell, exulting in the success of his audacious enterprise, boldly wrote to the same prelate, requesting him to announce to the King of France, the Queen-mother, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and other of her Majesty's friends, the marriage that had recently been solemnised between him and her.[2] "We trust," he says, "that no nobleman, being in our state and case, would have left anything undone that we have attempted. The place and promotion truly is great, but yet with God's grace, neither it nor any other accident shall ever be able to make us forget any part of our duty to any nobleman, or other our friends. Her Majesty might well have married with men of greater birth and estimation, but we are well assured never one more affectionately inclined to do her honour and service."[3]

The only articles recorded to have been delivered from Mary's royal wardrobe stores on this occasion, for the use of her detestable bridegroom, if so he may be termed, were "two cloaks of jennet, or wild-cat fur, to make him an evening mantle."[4] He does not appear to have affected fine dress; and there is no account of any jewels having been appropriated for his decoration.

On the Sunday after the marriage, that profligate and time-serving disgrace to the Reformed Church, Adam Bothwell, who still bore his former title of Bishop of Orkney, in his sermon, declared the penitence of the newly-wedded Duke for his past life, assuring the congregation "that he had confessed himself to have been a very evil liver, which he would now amend, and conform himself to the Church."[5]

[1] Stevenson's Illustrations, 177. [2] Ibid., 178. [3] Ibid.

[4] Treasury Records, kindly communicated by Joseph Robertson, Esq., of her Majesty's Register House, Edinburgh.

[5] Drury to Cecil, May 20, 1567—State Paper Office MS.

As a proof of his zeal, a revocation of the Queen's late statute, allowing liberty of conscience to persons of her own religion, was proclaimed, and conformity to the forms of worship by law established enjoined under pains and penalties. But the popular feeling against him was too strong to be overcome by these shallow arts. Every tongue denounced him as the murderer of the King, and the ravisher and cruel tyrant of the hapless Queen. No one could obtain access to her presence without an express licence from him, having then to pass through two antechambers lined with men-at-arms; whenever she rode out he was by her side, and she was environed by harquebussiers, being to all intents his strictly guarded prisoner, though he called her his wife and Queen, and affected to wait upon her in public with demonstrations of profound reverence, never appearing covered in her presence.[1] His brutality to her in private was, however, matter of notoriety. "He was so beastly and suspicious," says Melville, "that he suffered her not to pass a day over without causing her to shed abundance of salt tears." Bothwell's earnest desire was to get the Prince into his possession, but in that matter he was circumvented by the maternal providence of the Queen in having placed the royal infant in the care of the Earl of Mar. She had found means, before her marriage, of sending her faithful servant Lesley, Bishop of Ross, to Stirling with a secret message to Mar, repeating her earnest injunctions for him not to deliver her son, under any pretence whatsoever, into other hands than her own.[2] The safety of the Prince was nevertheless the pretext on which Mar joined the confederacy of the English faction against his confiding Sovereign, making the name of the unconscious babe their powerful weapon against the royal mother.

Everything was now progressing towards the accomplishment of the long-projected revolution. Mary was warned by the French ambassador that her perfidious brother the Earl of Moray, who she fancied was on the Continent, "was still in England, practising with the Coun-

[1] Letter of Morton and the other rebel lords to Throckmorton, July 20, 1567—Stevenson's Illustrations. [2] Letter from Drury to Cecil.

cil there, little to her good, and speaking worse of her than became a subject,[1] much less one so nearly connected with her by ties of blood," and beholden to her generosity for all his wealth and titles. Moray's acting partner in the deep game he was playing for the sovereignty of Scotland, Morton, now withdrew himself from the Court of Holyrood, crossed the water into Fifeshire, the nucleus of the projected insurrection, and took up his abode at his conveniently situated house at Aberdour.[2] Sir Robert Melville, too, Mary's ambassador to the Court of England, was the secret agent of the conspirators against her. His brother, Sir James Melville, her most trusted and confidential servant, whom she fondly imagined her sincere adviser and candid friend, was the person employed by the confederates to arrange with Sir James Balfour the delivery of the Castle of Edinburgh, with all her artillery, her plate, jewels, and regalia, into the hands of Morton when the proper moment for openly appearing in arms against her should arrive.[3] Lethington, who had always played the part of Achitophel in Mary's Council, especially in regard to the acquittal of Bothwell and her most unhappy marriage to that guilty ruffian, having done all the mischief he could, only remained with her as the spy of England, and the unsuspected coadjutor of his fellow-conspirators for her ruin. In the course of a few days, however, Bothwell, who had either detected his perfidy or found cause to suspect it, fell to high words with him in the Queen's chamber, and, drawing his dagger upon him, would have slain him then and there; but Mary, perceiving Bothwell's design, threw herself intrepidly between them, and saved Lethington's life almost at the risk of her own. He fled the next day to his brother-in-law, the Earl of Atholl, at that time the recognised head of the league for the pretended objects of avenging the death of Darnley, and taking measures for the security of the infant Prince, and delivering the Queen from the thraldom in which she was kept by Bothwell. Bothwell therefore found it necessary, in order to counteract the general impression that she was held

[1] Letter from Drury to Cecil, May 20, 1567—State Paper Office MS.
[2] Ibid., May 25. [3] Sir James Melville's Memoirs, 179, 180.

by him in restraint, to make her ride abroad with him daily, and to provide public shows for the amusement of the people, at which they both appeared.[1]

One evening there was a pageant on the water at Leith, which she was compelled to grace with her presence, and to see him ride at the ring and review the troops, after which some military exercises were performed in the manner of a sham fight; but it was observed that, whenever the Queen went abroad, she was surrounded by the company of harquebussiers, and few others were permitted to draw near her person.[2] Among other odd stories which that inveterate gossip, Sir William Drury, considered it not beneath the dignity of his office to communicate to the English Premier, for the edification of their royal mistress, Queen Elizabeth, is the following: "There is a witch in the north land that affirms the Queen Mary shall have yet to come two husbands more. 'Arbroath [the second son of the Duke of Châtelherault] shall be one of them, and to succeed the Duke of Orkney, who,' she says, 'shall not live half a year, or a year at the most.' The fifth husband she names not, but she says 'in his time she shall be burned,' which death divers doth speak of to happen unto her; and as yet, it is said, she fears the same." In a previous letter he writes: "There hath been an interlude of boys played at Stirling, which hath much offended the Earl of Bothwell, for the same was of the manner of the King's death, and the arraignment of the Earl, who in the play he that did represent him was hanged, meaning but in sport—but it had likely proved to an earnest, for he was so long hanged that hardly in a long time could life be recovered, but rather holden for dead. This was before the Lords, who, the Earl thinks, were devisers of the same."[3]

Bothwell's sister, who was now married to their kinsman, the eldest son of the Earl of Caithness, was still retained as the principal lady-in-waiting on the Queen, while his old friends, the Lady Buccleuch, and her sister Lady Reres, were distanced by him, which, according to Sir William

[1] Letters from Drury to Cecil, May 25. [2] Ibid.
[3] Border Correspondence.

Drury's statement, they took in evil part, "railing much, both in speech and writing, against Bothwell and the Queen." It is scarcely necessary to observe, that, if these malcontent ladies had really been cognisant of anything amiss in Mary's conduct, the expediency of bringing them forward as witnesses against her would have been perceived by Moray and the Lords of Secret Council, whose literary organ, Buchanan, stigmatises Lady Reres with being an accomplice in the guilt they were endeavouring to fix on her Majesty. But the traitors confined themselves to libellous assertions, instead of attempting to substantiate their charges by anything in the shape of legal evidence. Lady Reres' name is mixed up with several statements contained in the forged letters; why was she not examined on the subject before the Scotch Privy Council and the English Commissioners, for the purpose of verifying the incidents detailed there? The fact that she was not, though she was no longer on friendly terms with her royal mistress, affords presumptive proof of the falsehood of charges which rest on the unsupported basis of papers produced by Morton, an accomplice in Darnley's murder, for the purpose of shifting the suspicion of his own crime on the royal widow.

During the month of misery Mary was doomed to spend as the bride of Bothwell, her pecuniary destitution compelled her to retrench her household expenses, and either to discharge or submit to the dismissal of many of her servants, also to send some of her plate to the Mint. Bothwell, in her name, sent the Lord Boyd to the confederate Lords, who were now assembling in force at Stirling, to endeavour to effect an accommodation; but his mission proved ineffectual. The object for which they had been labouring, ever since her intention to marry Darnley in the spring of 1565, was declared; her deposition was now likely to be accomplished. Those who were willing to venture life and lands for her sake would not be under the authority of Bothwell, or stir a finger to oppose the league against him, for the confederate Lords declared "that they were taking up arms to deliver the Queen from his cruel

tyranny and thraldom."[1] Under this specious pretext an army was quickly raised to fight against her whom many a high-spirited and chivalric recruit fancied he was arming himself to serve. There is reason to suppose that Mary, being herself deluded into this belief, held secret intelligence with the leaders of the insurrection, in the hope of being liberated from her intolerable bondage. It was however asserted by Bothwell's party, that, when she heard of the convention of the Lords, she used this speech: "For Argyll, I know well enough how to stop his mouth," meaning the giving him a suit which he desired; "and for Atholl, he is but feeble—I will deal well enough with him; and for Morton, his boots are but now pulled off, and still soiled—I will return him again,"—meaning to banish him. "And for the Earl of Mar, I *lippen* [expect] much friendship from him; he hath assured me to be mine faithfully, and for ever."[2] The deplorable state of the Queen's health is noticed in the same document, and that, from the frequency and length of her fainting fits, she was supposed to be afflicted with that woeful malady, falling sickness.[3] The heart of the royal mother, in the midst of misery, which was producing this agonising brain affection, yearned after her infant boy, the only tie that bound her to life. She sent a message to Mar, expressive of her earnest desire to come to Stirling to see him; but Mar replied, "that he could not permit her to do so, if accompanied by more than a dozen persons." Stirling was then occupied by the forces of the confederate Lords; and of course her visit was not permitted under these circumstances, Bothwell being then the arbiter of her movements.

The Romish Lords, spiritual and temporal, having required of the Queen to be allowed to avail themselves of the liberty implied in the Act of Toleration, Mr Craig inveighed from the pulpit against it; whereupon Bothwell, now willing to make him his friend, sent for him, and boasted "that he had dashed the bishop's suit."[4] He

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[2] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil, inedited—Border Correspondence.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid., May 31.

was now a constant attendant at the sermons. But the Court was deserted, and the impending storm lowered more darkly. The associated Lords who had signed the bond recommending Bothwell as a proper husband for their widowed sovereign lady, were foremost in denouncing the marriage, and communicated their plans to the Queen of England. Elizabeth had no objection to anything but the proposed inauguration of the infant Prince, that being a measure which her deep-seeing view of the republican spirit of the times taught her might be extended on some future occasion to England, and put in practice against herself in the event of any formidable dispute between her and her nobles. The boy was the presumptive heir of the Britannic realms; she desired to have him in her own possession, and instructed the Earl of Bedford to treat with the associate Lords, through her secret-service-man Kirkaldy of Grange, whether they could be content for their Prince to be sent to England, to be placed in the keeping of his grandmother the Countess of Lennox.[1] The wily traitors understood their game better than to be thus outwitted. The Prince, about whose safety they were professing such concern, was in their own possession; for Mar, to whom his royal mother had confided him as her choicest jewel, was with them in their confederacy for crowning him as King of Scotland. Each had his eye on the chances of ruling Scotland under the shadow of the infant's name, and knew enough of the temper of the Scotch to be aware that not only would their hopes be annihilated by such a proceeding, but the very stones of Edinburgh would rise up against those who should be art and part in selling the representative of the royal line of Bruce and Stuart to "the ancient enemy." As they depended on Elizabeth for encouragement and assistance in their revolutionary enterprise, they parried her demands so adroitly that she was for years flattered into the delusive expectation of getting the son of Mary Stuart into her hands.

There is every reason to suspect that Du Croc, the French

[1] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil, June 5, 1567—Border Correspondence. Tytler's Hist. Scot., vol. vii. p. 101.

ambassador, to whom the designs of the Lords were, by his own account, well known,[1] had received secret instructions from his own Court to allow them to play out their game without remonstrance, provided they were willing to continue the old alliance with France, and keep the Prince out of the hands of the English Sovereign. Moray's secret alliance with the Huguenot members of the Queen-mother's Cabinet, and his calumnies against his royal sister, had the most inimical effect on her cause, as may clearly be traced by the proceedings of the French ambassadors at the crisis of her fate.

"A proclamation having been issued in the Queen's name, May 28th, requiring the male population of the southern shires to convene at Melrose, on the 15th of June, with fifteen days' provision, to proceed with her Majesty and her Lieutenant the Duke of Orkney, her spouse, against the insurgents on the Border,"[2] the confederate Lords, suspecting that the levy was intended to be used against them, determined to strike the first blow, by marching to Edinburgh a week before the convention was appointed to meet at Melrose, and surprising Bothwell and the Queen at Holyrood Abbey, having previously insured the co-operation of Sir James Balfour, the Governor of the Castle.[3] Bothwell being informed of their design, and des-

[1] See his own letter to Catharine de Medicis, May 18, in Teulet.

[2] Keith; Chalmers; Tytler.

[3] A contemporary copy of the secret bond of association, or pact, between the Lords of Secret Council and Sir James Balfour for that purpose, is preserved in the charter-room of the Earl of Morton. It affords the following additional documentary evidence in favour of Mary, framed by the very men who afterwards dared to accuse her of collusion with Bothwell in all his crimes:—"We, earls, lords, barons, and others under-subscribed, of the nobility, having respect that the Queen's Highness' most noble person was apprehended by the Earl of Bothwell upon the —— day of April, and thereafter by force and violence of armed men conveyed to the Castle of Dunbar, there detained and kept in sure and firm ward by the said Earl by the space of —— days. In like manner, her Grace being environed, as well by a number of men of war as by the whole friends of the Earl of Bothwell *bodden* [prepared] in armour, was conveyed from place to place in such parts as he had most dominion and power to command; during the which space that the said Earl had her most noble person in the thraldom above specified, her Majesty being only accompanied with a few of her domestic servants, he ceased not by ways and *unleisum* [unallowable] means to seduce her Grace to an unlawful and unhonest marriage.

"The nobility and inhabitants of this our native country, in likewise

titute of the means of defence, retreated in the night of the 6th of June to Borthwick Castle, which is about twelve miles from Edinburgh, carrying the Queen with him—having previously emitted in her name a proclamation contradicting the seditious tales circulated by the conspirators that the Prince was in danger from the murderers of his father, by a solemn declaration "that such sinister reports were the reverse of truth, for she had placed her son in such safe hands that the security of his person and careful culture of his mind need not be doubted, all things having been ordered, according to the ancient customs of the realm, by those to whom that charge of right belonged."[1] What must have been the feelings of the unfortunate Queen when she learned that the Earl of Mar, the very person to whom she had confided the care of her boy, was marching with the rest of the associate Lords to Edinburgh, and uniting with them in the popular but deceitful pretence, that they were compelled to take up arms to provide for the defence of the Prince's person?

At Mary's departure from Edinburgh to Borthwick, the keeper of her wardrobe stores delivered to her faithful attendant, Courcelles, for her use, "a silver basin, a silver kettle for heating water, a small cabinet with lock and key, and two thousand pins."[2] Bothwell certainly never expected to

being informed that the said Earl as yet remains in his most wicked intention and firm purpose to keep our Sovereign's person in the thraldom and subjection aforesaid, environed with men of war, his friends, so that none of the nobility of her Grace's realm may resort to her presence to know her mind without their most extreme and utter danger, wherethrough he intends to utterly ruin and decay the good fame of our dearest Sovereign, liberty of the commonweal, and privilege granted to the nobility thereof. Sir James Balfour of Pittindrech, knight, clerk of our Sovereign's register, and keeper of the Castle of Edinburgh, tendering the Queen's Majesty's most dangerous state, and the peril that may come to the commonweal, has, upon the like zeal with us, faithfully promised, and by the tenour hereof promises, to aid and assist us, or any part of us that shall enterprise and put order to the premises of the Castle of Edinburgh, for furthering of our enterprises devised and to be devised. Providing always that he may be so required *as his honour be safe* at our first coming into the town of Edinburgh." The associate Lords conclude their bond by covenanting with this notorious accomplice in Darnley's murder to support, maintain, and hold him harmless for all his former deeds, and to advance and prefer him to all honour and profit, and especially to maintain and continue him in the keeping of the Castle of Edinburgh.

[1] Chalmers; Keith. [2] Treasury Records, General Register House.

return, for he sent all his papers, his plate, jewels, and other personals, both from Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Abbey, to Dunbar.[1]

When Bothwell had bestowed the Queen within the massy walls of the strong fortress of Borthwick, under the charge of his friend the Laird of Crookston, the castellan, he left her for the first time since he had seized her person at Foulbriggs, and proceeded to Melrose in the hope of gathering forces for the purpose of attacking the associate Lords.[2] After two or three days' absence he returned without having succeeded in his object, in evil mood withal, for he declared "his intention of breaking up and dispersing all the Queen's French servants,"[3] many of whom had been the faithful and affectionate attendants or companions of her childhood. Small love did such proceedings indicate between the royal captive and her oppressor. If there had been confidence and unity of purpose between the Queen and Bothwell, they might have remained in perfect security at Borthwick Castle, which was impregnable to every assault but that of a heavy battery of artillery, such as Cromwell, nearly a century later, brought to play against it from an opposite height. But the associate Lords possessed no such means of attack, and the whole neighbourhood was devoted to Bothwell, and under obedience to his feudal authority.

Borthwick Castle is built of solid blocks of stone, on a steep mound, moated and surrounded with high walls of defence, flanked with fortified towers. Even if these could have been won, the central fortress is of such mighty strength, and so constructed, that it might have been held by a handful of courageous and determined women against an invading army. The windows are nearly thirty feet from the ground, and there is only one door of entrance. The staircases, steep, narrow, and spiral, can only be approached by one person at a time, through a labyrinth of dark arches, so low, that it is necessary not merely to bend the head, but to crouch almost double several times, before a foot can be

[1] Bothwell's Memorial.
[2] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil, 9th June 1567—State Paper Office.
[3] Ibid.

planted on the first stair. The local traditions of the place still indicate that Mary and Bothwell did not occupy the same chamber while at Borthwick, but slept far remote from each other in different quarters of the castle. The closet on the stairs, leading to the suite of private state apartments, erroneously pointed out by the guide as Queen Mary's bedroom, was, however, the lodging appropriated to the captain of the guard, or gentleman-in-waiting, whose duty it was to defend the approach to her chamber in case of danger. The back stairs, lobby, dressing-room, retiring-closets, and passages leading to the dormitories of the ladies of the bedchamber, maids of honour, &c., plainly denote the fact that the Queen's chamber was that at the south end of the state apartments, communicating, according to the etiquette of the period, with the private chapel-royal, the altar and piscina of which still remain. The roofs and walls of partition are gone, but the ground plan may still be traced of the small presence-chamber, into which the Queen's bedroom opened, an ante-room beyond, communicating with the chapel and the lobbies leading to the stairs descending to the banqueting-hall. The sleeping-room appropriated by tradition to Bothwell was near the guardroom on the first floor.

The associate Lords, having assembled themselves in council in Edinburgh, on the 11th June, declared their determination "to enterprise the delivery of the Queen's most noble person from the captivity and restraint in which she had been now for a long time held by the murderer of her husband, who had usurped the government of her realm," exhorting all her subjects, "who would not be esteemed parties to the aforesaid crimes and treasons, to join them in taking up arms for that honourable enterprise."[1] They put forth a proclamation at the Mercat Cross, the next day,[2] in language still more explicit, in regard to the outrageous treatment to which the Queen had been subjected, the compulsory nature of her marriage to Bothwell, and the thraldom wherein he continued to hold her: for which cause they declared that "they, the nobles of Scotland, minded with all

[1] Anderson's Collections, vol. i. pp. 129, 130. [2] Ibid., 131.

their forces to deliver the Queen's most noble person forth of captivity and prison, and to punish Bothwell both for the cruel murder of the late King Henry, the ravishing and detention of the Queen, and the wicked design he meditated against the Prince, charging all who would not take part at once with them in their righteous and loyal enterprise to quit Edinburgh within four hours." This appeal was heartily responded to, and the confederates, being joined by Lord Home and his puissance on the road, attempted to surprise Borthwick Castle the same night. Though they came in great force, yet, calculating on the strength of the place, they determined to proceed by stratagem, and sent a small party forward to cry at the gates for succour, announcing themselves to be a party of friends chased by the rebel forces, thinking by that means to obtain entrance.[1] Bothwell, however, who was just about to go to bed, was too cunning to be thus outwitted. Yet, strange to say, he who had hitherto proved himself a man of indomitable courage and resolution, took a sudden panic, and thought proper to provide for his own personal safety by effecting his escape with the son of the Laird of Crookston, through a postern-door in the wall that surrounded the castle,[2] leaving the Queen behind, with not more than seven or eight persons in her company. The only probable solution to his conduct on this occasion is, that the Queen, being, as the associate Lords had themselves declared, a reluctant captive within these walls, refused to stand by him if he attempted to defend the castle, and was prepared to treat him as a traitor in the event of its capture by the assailants. At any rate it is certain, from her ardent and adventurous character, she would not have hesitated to partake his flight if she had loved him. Why, then, it may be asked, did she not order the gates to be flung open to the associate Lords as soon as she was delivered from the restraint of his presence? This is not difficult to explain. The castellan, who was devoted to Bothwell's interest, and his men-at-

[1] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil—inedited Border Correspondence.
[2] Ibid., June 12, 1567.

arms, yet remained, and, though few in number, they were more than able to gainsay one feeble woman's will.

The Lords, with their followers, encompassed the house, calling on Bothwell by the names of "traitor, murderer, and butcher, to come forth and maintain his challenge, offered to them that would charge him with the murder of the King." Some of the party, approaching the walls, used divers unseemly and undutiful speeches against the Queen, with language too coarse to be repeated,[1] thus startling her with a revelation of their feelings which both alarmed and roused her spirit to resistance, and at any rate had for that time the effect of deterring her from putting herself into their hands.

The beleaguering party, though amounting to nearly twelve hundred men, not being provided with cannon, looked at the height and thickness of the walls of the fortress, and, despairing of taking it, fell back to Dalkeith. Mary, being freed from the restraint of Bothwell's presence, and the danger of an assault from them, resumed her royal courage, and, beginning to act for herself, despatched the young Laird of Reres with a message from her to Sir James Balfour, the Governor of Edinburgh Castle, enjoining him "to hold it out for her, and to fire on the Lords if they attempted to enter the town." She wrote at the same time to Du Croc, the French ambassador, begging him to confer with the Lords, and require of them, in her name, "what was their real intention, and what they would be at."[2] Du Croc had an interview with them, in which he represented to them "the inconsistency of their present proceedings with the part they had previously acted, having not only cleared Bothwell by an assize, and confirmed his acquittal in Parliament, but united to recommend him as a husband to the Queen. If they had changed their minds in consequence of his carrying her away to Dunbar, why," he demanded, "did they not object after he brought her Majesty back to Edin-

[1] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil, June 12, 1567—Border Correspondence.

[2] Letter of James Beton to his brother, Andrew Beton—Laing's Appendix.

burgh, as he was in the Castle five or six days before the marriage took place?"[1] Their replies were mere prevarications, and protestations of their determination "to protect the Prince from his father's murderer"[2]—a name no less applicable to Morton, the leader of the confederates, and the arch-traitor Lethington, than to Bothwell himself. The Queen was not, however, destitute of a strong party, for that same day the Earl of Huntley, the Lords Boyd and Galloway, with Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, marched into Edinburgh, and published a proclamation, "requiring all loyal men to don their armour and pass to the relief of the Queen's Majesty, who was besieged at Borthwick Castle."[3] Unfortunately for her, they were withstood by the Provost, and forced to retreat to the Castle, which Sir James Balfour, though in secret understanding with the conspirators, continued to hold in the Queen's name till he saw how the balance would turn.[4]

If Mary had been content to remain quietly at Borthwick Castle, all might perchance have gone well with her; but seeing herself relieved for a few brief hours from the terror of Bothwell's presence, she could not resist the opportunity of making a valiant effort to regain her liberty. At the midnight hour, arrayed in the dress of a cavalier, booted and spurred, she stole from her chamber unattended, and, gliding down a turret stair, let herself down from the window in the banqueting hall, which is still pointed out by local tradition, and thought he height cannot be less than eight-and-twenty feet, reached the ground in safety, being probably assisted by her ladies from within, passed through the same low postern in the wall by which Bothwell had previously escaped; and while all in the castle were wrapped in their first sound sleep, she, their Sovereign, walked forth unobserved into the night without a single person either to defend or guide her on her unknown way. She mounted a close-cropped nag which she found bridled and saddled without the walls at the foot of the mound. It must have been provided for her use by some faithful person of low

[1] Du Croc's Letter to Charles IX.—in Teulet.
[2] Ibid.
[3] James Beton's Letter—Laing's Appendix.
[4] Ibid.

degree, to whom she had confided her intention. Such among the readers of Mary's biography who may chance to be familiar with the local features of that wild district of mountain, moor, and moss, in which Borthwick Castle is situated, will not be surprised that the royal fugitive became bewildered in the then trackless labyrinth of glens, swamps, and thorny brakes, through which she vainly strove to make her way to a place of refuge she was never doomed to find. According to local tradition, her humble steed carried her over Crichton Muir, which, at that sweet season of the year, is the haunt of innumerable glow-worms. Those "stars of the green earth" were perhaps the only lights that shone on the lonely path of Scotland's hapless Queen. She must have travelled in a circle, for, after wandering all night, she had made so little progress that at dawn of day she was encountered near Black Castle, at Cakermuir, scarcely two miles from Borthwick, by Bothwell himself, at the head of a party of his vassals. She had then no choice but to accompany him whithersoever he chose to take her, and he hurried her away with him once more to Dunbar. She performed the whole journey, we are told, riding on a man's saddle.

Those who pervert every fact into evidence of Mary's imaginary passion for Bothwell, assert that she escaped from Borthwick in order to rejoin him, and met him in consequence of a mutual agreement on this spot; but the tale is too absurd for anything save an episode in a romance, where all difficulties are got over by the pen of a ready writer. Bothwell, as we have seen, provided for his own safety when he saw Borthwick surrounded by so numerous a company of assailants, leaving the Queen to take care of herself. How could he make any appointment for their meeting on the following night or morning, when he left the castle in which she was invested by twelve hundred men? If he had foreseen the contingency of their retiring without storming the castle, he would surely not have fled with such precipitation from it as he did; and if he had expected Mary to follow, he would at least have ordered some of his people to watch for her,

and take care of her by the way. The circumstances under which she got out of Borthwick Castle speak for themselves, and proclaim that she was willing to encounter any peril in preference to abiding his return.

Bothwell had a very near chance of falling into the hands of his enemies the night he left the Queen at Borthwick, for he and his companion, the Master of Crookston, being perceived as they stole down the mound, were pursued; they then separated, and fled in different directions. Lord Home's men gave chase, and captured young Crookston; but Bothwell, though they were within an arrow-shot of him, had the good luck to escape, and remained perdue all the next day,[1] while the confederate Lords and their array were still swarming round the walls of Borthwick Castle. How, then, could there be any agreement of the kind between the Queen and him, or any probability of their meeting again, after his unchivalric desertion of her, except through a fatal coincidence. This, as the castles of Crichton and Cakermuir were part of his own domains, naturally occurred in consequence of his lurking in that neighbourhood among his vassal lairds and kinsmen; for poor Mary, neither knowing her way nor being provided with a guide, unhappily crossed his path. The nag on which she was mounted had probably been accustomed to go to Black Castle, and took that road.

[1] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil, June 12, 1567—Border Correspondence.

MARY STUART.

CHAPTER XXXV.

SUMMARY

Queen Mary carried from Dunbar by Bothwell—Sleeps at Seton—In the field at five next morning—Marches to Musselburgh—Finds the rebel Lords already there—She takes her post on Carberry Hill—Du Croc vainly seeks to negotiate an accommodation between her and the Lords—Armies ready to engage—Bothwell offers to decide the quarrel by single combat—Queen forbids it—Determines to leave him—Sends for Kirkaldy of Grange—Proposes to put herself into the hands of the Lords—Their deceitful promises to her through Kirkaldy—Bothwell tries to dissuade her from trusting them—She will not listen to his objections—Refuses to let him fight for her—Will not go with him to Dunbar—Commands him to depart—She renders herself to Kirkaldy—Queen Mary's dress—She goes with Kirkaldy to the Lords—Her reception—Insulted by Morton's men—Perfidious conduct of the associate Lords—Queen Mary's resentment and distress—They drag her to Edinburgh as a prisoner—Their outrageous treatment of her—They shut her up in the Black Turnpike—Deprive her of her ladies—She is left alone all night in prison—Shows herself next morning at the window to the people—Her despair—Demonstrations of the people in her favour—The Lords beguile her into pacifying the mob—She dismisses her friends—Rebel Lords break faith with her again—Their falsehood and cruelty—They drag her to Holyrood as a prisoner—Expose her to insults of the rabble and vile women of the Canongate—Her intrepid demeanour—Fidelity of her ladies—Lindsay and Ruthven hurry Queen Mary away to Lochleven as a captive.

THE tidings were brought to the Queen and Bothwell the day of their arrival at Dunbar, June 13, that the associate Lords had entered Edinburgh, with scarcely a show of resistance, in consequence of the collusion of the Provost, their confederate. No time was therefore lost by Bothwell in sending out messengers in all directions, with her Majesty's

royal letters, to raise the country in her defence. This call was so well responded to, that Bothwell, flattering himself that his unpopularity was confined to Edinburgh, was eager to attack his antagonists. At ten o'clock on the morning of Saturday, June 14, taking the Queen with him, he left Dunbar and advanced to Haddington, halted at Gladsmuir, and caused an artfully-worded proclamation to be made in her Majesty's name, declaring that the insurgent Lords had taken up arms under false pretences, and urging all loyal subjects to rally in her defence. Elated by the numbers who continued to join the royal standard, he pushed on to Seton the same night.[1] Though it was very late when they arrived there, he allowed the Queen so little time for refreshment and repose, that she was again on horseback with him, and on the road to Edinburgh, at five o'clock on the Sunday morning. The associate Lords, having had due intimation from their confederates in the Queen's train that Bothwell thought to take them by surprise, were still earlier in the field, having left Edinburgh two hours after midnight and marched to Musselburgh, where they refreshed their men, and waited for the arrival of the royal army. The Lords had three thousand men, well weaponed and appointed. Their army, with the exception of the craftsmen of Edinburgh, was chiefly composed of gentlemen and their retainers. The company that followed the royal banner did not amount to two thousand, including two hundred and ten harquebussiers and Bothwell's Border force; but the aggregate were peasants and villagers, without any military training or experience, who had come in obedience to the royal summons, but unprovided with proper arms and rations. Bothwell had made no arrangements for supplying them, and they were faint and spent with their long march on the preceding day. Neither the Queen nor those who came to fight for her had broken their fast that morning.[2] "Albeit her Majesty was there," observes Sir James Melville, "I cannot name it to be her army, for many of them that were with her had opinion that she had intelli-

[1] Beton's Letter—Laing's Appendix. Fragmentary document in Toulot. Continuation of Knox.

[2] Ibid.

gence with the Lords, chiefly such as understood the Earl of Bothwell's mishandling her, and many indignities that he had both said and done unto her since the marriage was made. He was so beastly and suspicious that he suffered her not to pass over one day in patience, making her cause to shed abundance of salt tears. So part of his own company detested him, other part believed that her Majesty would fain be quit of him."[1]

Both the armies had posted themselves at Musselburgh, about five miles from Edinburgh; but the Queen and Bothwell took possession of the rising ground of Carberry Hill, within the old encampment by the Falside, just above the ground where the disastrous battle of Pinkie was fought twenty years before.[2] That Black Saturday, as it was called, had been the great calamity of Mary's infant reign; but its woes had passed lightly over her young head. The Sovereign in her fifth year, for whose sake that deadly strife between England and Scotland had been tried, unconscious of the blow that had fallen on her realm, had continued to sport with her band of little gay companions in the fairy islet of Inchmahome, as gaily as if she had been only a peasant child, instead of the sad inheritrix of the royalty and woes of a hundred kings. How different were her feelings, when, in her twenty-fifth year, she looked, with tearful eyes and agonising heart, on the ground that had been enriched with the precious blood of Scotland's noblest chivalry, and thought, perchance, that if a few of the gallant hearts that lay buried there could have obeyed her summons, she might yet have prevailed over the survivors of the generation of vipers who had sold her and their country, successively, to Henry of England, to Somerset, and to Elizabeth. It is, however, impossible that Mary Stuart could have suspected Morton, Mar, Kirkaldy of Grange, and others of the confederates of Cecil, of half the villany their correspondence in our State Paper Office unfolds;[3] nor did she clearly comprehend, till

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

[2] MS. Letter from Lord Scrope—State Paper Office MSS., inedited.

[3] The confederacy of the English Government with the conspirators is proved by Bedford's letter to Cecil, dated May 11: "I understand by

too late, that the army they had raised under the pretext of effecting her deliverance from the painful thraldom in which she had been kept ever since the 24th of April by Bothwell, was to be used for her destruction, and not his. Neither of the armies, indeed, knew to a certainty what they were going to fight about; nor did they appear to have any desire for an encounter. The principal anxiety on either side being to get the vantage-ground, and to avoid having the sun in their eyes, they continued the chief part of the day looking towards each other, inactively, on opposite hills, a little brook running through the valley which separated them.

The two armies continued inactively gazing at each other till the meridian hour was past. At three o'clock in the afternoon, Du Croc, the French ambassador, came to the rebel Lords, and offered his services to mediate an accommodation between the Queen and them.[1] They appeared very glad to see him, and told him "that if the Queen were willing to withdraw herself from the wretch who held her captive, they would recognise her as their Sovereign, and would serve her on their knees as the humblest and most obedient of subjects; or, on the other hand, if Bothwell would come forth between the two armies, and make good his challenge to meet in single combat any one who should maintain that he was the murderer of the late King, they would produce a champion, and a second, or, if he desired it, ten or twelve." The grave diplomatist treated these proposals as too extravagant to be seriously proposed to the Queen. They declared "they would name no other," and protested "they would rather be buried alive than not

your last letters that her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's meaning is to have me make haste northward, to comfort those Lords of Scotland that are joined together to resist Bothwell's attempt." The treasonable intention of that guilty ruffian to seize the person of his defenceless Sovereign, and imprison her in the Castle of Dunbar till he had compelled her to succumb to his lawless will, had been known and winked at by these worthy confederates. Not one of them had addressed an appeal to the sister Queen for the rescue of their own; but as soon as Mary, driven to desperation, consented to purchase her liberty by marrying her ravisher, and thereby, in fatal hour, to identify his cause with hers, they applied for support against her to their friends Bedford, Cecil, and Elizabeth, and were encouraged and aided in various ways by them.

[1] Narrative in Teulet, vol. xi.

have the death of the King," as they now entitled their late adversary and victim Darnley, "investigated and punished," declaring "they should not perform their duty to God if this were not done" — that death of which Lethington was the principal contriver, and Morton had guilty foreknowledge. Du Croc begged them "to allow him to try what he could do with the Queen," observing, "that as he knew her to be a Princess of the greatest goodness, he thought perhaps he might devise some means with her for preventing the effusion of blood." [1] They were very unwilling, and he appeared offended by their demurs. Then Lethington took the word, and told him, "as he was the representative of a Prince whose friendship they were most anxious to preserve, they would allow him both to go and return."

Under the escort of fifty of their horsemen, Du Croc crossed the brook, and, preceded by runners who were sent forward to announce his approach, he was brought to the outposts of Queen Mary's army. The captain of the advanced guard instantly conducted him into the presence of her Majesty. After he had saluted her, and kissed her hands, he expressed his regret at the untoward state of her affairs, and assured her "that it would cause the greatest concern to her royal mother-in-law and the King of France to see her in such trouble." He then proceeded to inform her that "he had been conferring with the Lords, who had told him they were her very humble and affectionate subjects." [2] "It looks very ill of them," rejoined Mary, "to act in contradiction to their own signatures, after they have themselves married me to him, having previously acquitted him of the deed of which they now accuse him. But, nevertheless, if they are willing to acknowledge their duty, and request my pardon, I shall be ready to accord it, and receive them with open arms." At this moment Bothwell, who had been inspecting the disposition of his army, came up. "We saluted each other," continues Du Croc,[3] "but I

[1] Du Croc's Letter to the King of France, June 17, 1567, in Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 112, *et seq.* [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

did not offer to receive his embrace. He asked me in a loud voice, on purpose for his army to hear, and with a bold demeanour, 'What it was the Lords would be at?' I answered him in as loud a tone, 'that I had just come from speaking with them, and they had assured me "they were very humble subjects and servants of the Queen,"' but, lowering my voice, I added 'that they were his mortal foes.' Then he asked in a very loud voice, 'if the assurances they had given him were not well known to every one?'" This was in allusion to the band of association they had all subscribed, engaging to make his cause their own, and to defend him with their lives and goods from all who should accuse him of Darnley's murder. "I have never," he said, "intended to offend one of them, but rather to please all, and they only speak of me as they do out of envy of my greatness. But Fortune is free to any one who can win it; and there is not one of them who would not gladly be in my place."[1] Then, affecting an air of tender solicitude for the distress of the Queen, he begged Du Croc, "for the love of God, and to put the Queen out of pain, as he saw she was in extreme trouble about it, and to spare the effusion of blood, to go back to the rebel Lords, and propose in his name to try the cause by single combat with any one of them that would advance from their host, and fight with him hand to hand between the two armies, provided only their champion were a man of suitable rank, as he had himself the honour to be the husband of the Queen," adding "that his cause was so just that he was sure God would decide for him."[2] Bothwell's bold appeal to the Omniscient Judge, to whom the secrets of all hearts are known, must have produced the desired effect on Mary's mind, for she then declared "that she would espouse his quarrel, and esteem it as her own." Nevertheless, she objected to putting the fortunes of the day on the doubtful issue of a single combat. Du Croc also treated the notion as absurd, but continued to profess

[1] Du Croc's Letter to the King of France, June 17, 1567, in Labanoff, vol. ii. p. 112, *et seq.* [2] Ibid.

his desire of being able to say or do anything in the name of the King his master that might be serviceable to Her Majesty, and prevent the hostile encounter of the armies. Then Bothwell, of whom he had studiously taken little notice, cut him short by telling him "that he could not talk to him just then, for his adversaries were approaching, having already crossed the brook; but," added he, "if you wish to resemble him who was the means of bringing about an amicable treaty between Scipio and Hannibal, when their two armies were about to close as these are now, you must not make yourself a partial judge on one side more than the other. If, however, you have any desire to see the encounter, I can promise you fine pastime, for there will be good fighting." Du Croc replied, "that, for the sake of the Queen and both armies, he should be very sorry for it to come to that."[1] Bothwell professed his conviction that he should win the day, and boasted "that he had four thousand men and three pieces of artillery, whereas the Lords had no artillery, and only three thousand five hundred men." Du Croc observed, "that Bothwell, having no noblemen of any weight, must depend on himself alone, while there were clever heads on the other side. Moreover, there appeared to be a great deal of murmuring and discontent among his people." His excellency then took his leave of the Queen with apparent regret and commiseration. When he left her, her eyes were full of tears. Yet there was no symptom of personal dismay or alarm betrayed by her from first to last.

Among the Border gentlemen who had joined the royal banner, out of affection for the Queen, were David Home of Wedderburn and his uncle John, of Blackadder, attended by a pretty strong band of men-at-arms, although Alexander Home, the chief of the name, his cousin-german, was with the Earl of Morton, their near kinsman. Some of David Home's servants having gone to too great a distance from the main army, to quench their thirst at a well—for the sun was very hot, with a parching wind—were taken by the opposite party, and brought to Morton. He asked them "whence

[1] Du Croc's letter to the King of France, June 17, 1567, in Labanoff.

they came, and to whom they belonged?" As soon as he was informed, he bade them "return and tell their master, from him, that, if he were the man he ought to be, he alone could put an end to those evils,"—meaning because he had come attended with a great band of vassals; and his attendants were almost the only military men with the Queen. (for the gentlemen on the Border generally abound with men, those in Lothian rather abound in wealth and riches); the rest were an unarmed undisciplined multitude, collected both from town and country;—so that he might have put an end to the war, if he had either revolted from the Queen and gone over to Morton, or returned to his home. Bothwell, aware of this, doubted his fidelity, and induced the Queen to ask "whether he, with truth and sincerity, would do his utmost endeavours for her service that day?" To which he answered, "I will do my utmost, having come there with that intention, otherwise I would not have come at all;" adding, "that he acknowledged her his mistress, and would serve her as such," entreating "that she would not disgrace him by having any suspicions of his fidelity, or think him capable of such baseness as to be one thing in appearance, and another in his heart." Blackadder answered to the same purpose, but, enraged that his loyalty should have been doubted, and knowing Bothwell to be the suggester of the question, he turned to him and said, "We will stay as long, and perhaps longer, with our royal mistress than you will; and we shall not fail to act as becomes faithful subjects."[1] They were as good as their word, tarrying with her till she was deluded into the fatal step of putting herself into the hands of the traitors calling themselves her nobles. Then they returned home, without either waiting for Morton or the head of their family. These high-spirited Scottish gentlemen were specimens of

[1] John Blackadder must not be confounded with Captain Blackadder, the sailor who was hanged by the confederate Lords on an accusation of being an accomplice in Darnley's murder, and died protesting his innocence of that foul deed, of which Morton and Lethington were among the principal accomplices. I am indebted to R. Chambers, Esq. for the communication of this interesting incident, copied from a Memoir of the Family of Home of Wedderburn (MS.), written by David Home of Godscroft, the historian of the house of Douglas.

a party acting independently both of Bothwell and the English faction, but devoted to the cause of their Queen. A thousand men of their temper might have extricated her from the trammels of the one, and preserved her from the snares of the others. It was for the advent of such a company—for Arbroath, Fleming, Seton, Huntley, her own friends, and their puissance, whom she knew were on their march from Linlithgow—that Mary was anxious to delay the time, and turned many a westward look as she sat with Mary Seton on a fragment of grey stone, beneath the royal standard on Carberry Hill.

When Du Croc returned to the rebel Lords, he told them "that her Majesty, with her accustomed clemency, had declared herself not only willing to forgive, but to receive them affectionately, if they would acknowledge their duty, and submit the dispute to the decision of a Parliament."[1] Their only answer to this was, clapping their morions on their heads, and begging him, "for the love of God, to retire from the field before the battle joined."

Kirkaldy of Grange meantime rode about the brae with two hundred horsemen, thinking to get between Bothwell and Dunbar. The Queen, who was watching the manœuvres of the enemy, inquired who it was, and, understanding that the Laird of Grange was chief of that company of horsemen, sent the Laird of Ormiston to desire him to come and speak with her under surety, which he did after he had sent and obtained leave of the Lords. While Grange was speaking with her Majesty, the Earl of Bothwell was suborning a soldier to shoot him; but Mary, perceiving his intention, gave a cry, and told him "he should not do her that shame, she having promised that Grange should come and return safely"[2]—showing thereby how little unity of purpose existed between Bothwell and her. Bothwell was impelled not merely by the natural ferocity of his evil nature to incite his follower to this treacherous deed, but was provoked by hearing Grange

[1] Letter of Du Croc to the King of France—in Labanoff, vol. ii.
[2] Sir James Melville's Memoirs, p. 183.

beguiling the Queen to put herself into the hands of the Lords, by telling her "how they would all love and serve her, if she would abandon him who was the murderer of her own husband."[1] It seems to have been Bothwell's intention, in trying to cause this outrage to be perpetrated in her presence, after she had guaranteed safe parley to one of the rebel leaders, to prevent the possibility of any amicable treaty being arranged between her and them. Finding himself frustrated in his design by her prompt interference, he proceeded stoutly to deny Grange's allegation, and again offered to maintain his innocence by appeal of battle, "challenging any man that would assert to the contrary to meet him in single combat."[2] Grange promised to send him an answer shortly, and, taking leave of the Queen, returned to the Lords, who said, "they were content that he should accept Bothwell's challenge;" but Bothwell replied that "Grange was neither earl nor lord, and therefore could not be his peer." The like answer made he to his old adversary, the Laird of Tullibardine. His desire was to fight with Morton, to whom he sent his personal defiance, desiring him "to come forth and fight with him hand to hand between the two armies, and let their personal encounter decide the quarrel."[3] Morton having no desire for the encounter, his friends kindly interposed, declaring "he was of more value than a hundred such as Bothwell." Then Patrick Lord Lindsay of the Byres, meet match for the ruffian Bothwell, stood forth and offered to fight as Morton's substitute. Morton lent him the sword of the Goliah of the house of Douglas, Archibald Bell-the-Cat, and bade him "go forth and conquer." Lindsay advanced before the army, fell on his knees, and uttered a long extempore prayer in a loud voice. After these accomplices in the murder, of which they had assumed the office of avengers, had made this theatrical display, Bothwell was informed that the Lord Lindsay was ready to do battle with him. Bothwell objected to Lindsay as inferior in rank, but consented to the combat, and advanced singly between the two

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs, p. 138.
[2] Home of Godscroft's Lives of the Douglases. [3] Ibid.

armies, mounted on a brave steed; but while they were arranging the preliminary ceremonies, the Queen, impatient of these follies, and unwilling to be made the prize of the victor, or eager, as her conduct proves, to be rid of Bothwell, sent privately for the Laird of Grange to come to her again, and told him "that, if the Lords would do as he had declared to her, she would leave the Earl of Bothwell and come to them." As they were then scarcely more than two bow-shots distant, Grange went to his confederates, communicated the Queen's message, and presently returned to her, "assuring her, in their united names, they would do as they had said."[1] She then informed Bothwell of her intention. He vehemently opposed it, assuring her "that the Lords were not to be trusted, as she would find to her cost if she were deluded into the rashness of putting herself into their hands." He besought her "rather to bide the event of a battle, or, if she preferred delay, to retire with him, under the escort of the harquebussiers and gentlemen who still surrounded her, to Dunbar, where he promised to defend her manfully, till her loyal subjects made head against the rebel Lords."[2] But nothing he could say had the slightest effect on her mind, so determined was she to separate her name from the infamy attached to his cause, and to extricate her person from his control. Yet, consistently with the magnanimity of her generous nature, she inquired of Grange "whether any assurance would be given for the safety of the Duke?" as she called Bothwell. "No," he replied; "they are resolved to kill him if they can get him."[3] Then observing that the Lords, impatient of the length of this parley, which they suspected was only intended to gain time, had given the signal to advance, he took Bothwell by the hand, and advised him "to save himself while he could;"[4] and the Queen commanded him to retire to Dunbar, where she said "she would write to him, or send him word what she would have him do."[5]

"Finding it impossible," says Bothwell, "for me to dis-

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[2] Bothwell's Memorial—Bell's Appendix.
[3] Du Croc to the King of France, June 17, 1567—Labanoff.
[4] Chalmers; Goodall; Lesley. [5] Bothwell's Memorial.

suade her from her purpose, or incline her to listen to any remonstrance, I entreated her to obtain at least a safe-conduct. The Laird of Grange, who had come in behalf of the opposite party, did himself in their name give that assurance; for he stated 'that he was for this sole reason delegated by all the others jointly for offering to the Queen their Sovereign true homage, and for giving her assurance and safe-conduct while going to meet them,' saying, 'that every one of them, according to his degree, desired nothing more than to yield to her all honour and obedience next after God in everything her Majesty might be pleased to command.' Thus," continues Bothwell, "I parted with her, she having requested me so to do, relying on the pledged faith and promises which they had given to her, by word of mouth as well as by letters."[1] It may be observed that Bothwell does not even pretend that Mary manifested, much less felt, the slightest grief or emotion at their separation, which, he testifies, was her own choice. Mary had been married to him exactly one month—a month which had been spent by her in tears, shrieks of agony, and demonstrations of frantic despair, denoting plainly the constraint that had been put on her inclination, and the misery his companionship had inflicted. She actually preferred confiding herself to the tender mercies of the assassins of David Riccio to remaining another day in his company, when an opportunity of leaving him occurred. Such being the fact, which no argument can alter, the nature of her feelings towards him may be surmised.

When Grange had seen Bothwell fairly off the field, and on the road to Dunbar, he returned to the associate Lords to announce the news to them.[2] They made no effort to pursue that great criminal. He had been their accomplice and tool in the murder of Darnley, and his capture might have been attended with fatal consequences to Morton, to Lethington, to the Balfours, and others of the guilty confederates, who had assumed the character of righteous avengers of innocent blood. It was their policy to connive at

[1] Bothwell's Memorial.

[2] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.

his escape, and to get the Queen into their hands. They accordingly desired Grange to pass up the hill again, and receive her Majesty. Mary, advancing to meet him, said, "Laird of Grange, I render me unto you upon the conditions ye rehearsed unto me in the names of the Lords,"[1] and gave him her hand. He knelt and kissed it; then, after her Majesty had been placed on horseback, he, remounting his black charger, preceded her down the hill, holding his steel bonnet high above his partially bald head with an air of eager exultation; for thus he is represented in the curious tinted sketch of Queen Mary's approach to the confederate Lords, which is still preserved in the State Paper Office. Her dress on that occasion is stated by Buchanan to have been "a short and very mean, and threadbare tunicle, reaching but very little below her knees." The author of the French Fragment, ascribed by Teulet to the Captain of Inchkeith, says, "that when he saw her at Dunbar, the morning of her arrival from Borthwick, she wore a red coat reaching to the middle of her leg, a rich tunic, which she had borrowed, and a taffaty pardessus, or cloak." "The Queen's apparel in the field," writes Drury, "was after the attire and fashion of the women of Edinburgh—a red petticoat, with sleeves tied with points, a partlet, a black velvet hat and muffler."[2] This description he had from an English ensign, who had been sent by him to perform the office of a spy, under colour of the courteous attention of bringing Queen Mary a packet of letters from the French ambassador in London. The young English officer overtook her on the Sunday morning, on her march from Seton to Musselburgh, delivered the letters into her own hand, remained near her person the whole day, and bore witness to the intrepidity of her deportment, and greatly censured those who could find it in their hearts to desert her cause. His account of her costume is no doubt as correct as could reasonably be expected from a masculine reporter of

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs.
[2] MS. Letters from Drury to Cecil, June 17 and 19, 1567—Border Correspondence.

ladies' apparel. In the contemporary drawing to which we have previously alluded, which was of course delineated on the spot, the Queen wears a black riding-hat and jacket, a white ruff, and a red and yellow skirt, the royal colours of Scotland. She is mounted on a large grey charger, which is led by one of her equerries in the royal livery, red and yellow; a young lady on a pony follows the Queen, wearing a black hat of a similar fashion, a white veil, a red jacket, and yellow petticoat. This was Mary Seton: her head is anxiously turned in the direction in which Bothwell and his party appear retreating; which was also the road towards Seton and Tranent, whence her brother was hourly expected to bring up his tardy powers.

The precipitate and ill-judged advance of Bothwell with the Queen from Dunbar to Seton, on the preceding day, baffled the calculations of the loyal nobles, and threw the game into Morton's hands. Conduct so opposed to common sense can only be imputed to Bothwell's conviction that the Queen intended to put herself at the head of her real friends, as soon as they gathered round her in sufficient force to deliver her from his thraldom, and then to treat on independent terms with the associate Lords, and thus all would unite for his ruin. It must have been to avert this contingency that he took the field with the hastily-levied muster, of which he was the sole director, thinking to surprise the associate Lords, and make himself master of Edinburgh by a *coup de main* before the arrival of the loyal party. If he had succeeded in these objects, he might have retained possession of the Sovereign's person, and continued his usurpation of her regal authority. It never could have entered into his calculations, that, in the event of his failure, Mary would prefer confiding herself to the double-dyed traitors who had come against her, to retiring with him to Dunbar, and awaiting the arrival of her own partisans. A monarch of the reflective sex might have perceived the expediency of temporising; but women are the creatures of impulse, and Mary Stuart, in obeying the

instincts of repulsion, which prompted her to seize this opportunity of extricating herself from Bothwell, found herself in no better case than the simple bird that falls into the coils of a serpent in endeavouring to escape from the talons of a cat.

When the leaders of the rebel host advanced to receive her, Mary frankly addressed them in these words: "My lords, I am come to you, not out of any fear I had of my life, nor yet doubting of the victory, if matters had come to the worst, but to save the effusion of Christian blood; and therefore have I come to you, trusting in your promises that you will respect me, and give me the obedience due to your native Queen and lawful Sovereign." [1]

Morton, who took upon him to act as spokesman for his confederates, bending his knee before her, in deceitful homage, replied, "Here, Madam, is the place where your Grace should be, and here we are ready to defend and obey you as loyally as ever the nobles of this realm did your progenitors." [2] The next moment yells rose from among his myrmidons of "Burn her! burn the murderess!" [3] with other epithets too coarse for repetition, which were intended for the Queen. She perceived at once that these intolerable insults were part and parcel of the perfidious scheme to which she had fallen a victim. Indignant, but undismayed, she turned to the Earl of Morton, and in plain words demanded of him, "What is your purpose? If it be the blood of your Princess you desire, take it; I am here to offer it, nor needs there other means to seek to be revenged." "After which words the Earl took her," continues our authority, "and committed her into safe custody." [4] This, then, was the cause and manner of her arrest. No wonder she exclaimed with passionate vehemence against her own rash folly in confiding to the solemn promises of the ungrateful traitors whom she had so recently pardoned for their grievous offences against her; and, yielding to her excited feelings, declared "that she would

[1] Keith. [2] Tytler. Chalmers. [3] Melville's Memoirs.
[4] MS. Letter from Lord Scrope to Cecil, June 17, 1567 — in the State Paper Office.

seek the protection of the Hamiltons, and her other loyal friends, who were," she said, "close at hand."

The associate Lords had used for the ensign of their party that day a white banner, with the delineation of the dead body of Darnley extended beneath a tree, with the infant Prince kneeling with folded hands, having a label proceeding from his mouth with these words, "Judge and avenge our cause, O Lord," — a device artfully chosen by the guilty accomplices in the murder, Morton, Lethington, and others of the conspirators, for the purpose of exciting the passions of the people against the Queen. A minute description of it while in preparation, and a drawing of it after its completion, were duly forwarded through their confederate, Sir William Drury, to the English premier, Cecil. Not a single step for the ruin of Mary Stuart was indeed taken without their knowledge.

"At her entry amongst the Lords," writes Drury, "they showed her the banner with the dead body with the rest, as I sent the similitude yesterday; which seeing, they say, she 'wished she had never seen him.'"[1] Buchanan affirms "that this banner was placed before her eyes by two soldiers, who held it up extended between two pikes; at which sight she swooned, and was with difficulty prevented from falling from her horse to the ground." Kirkaldy of Grange, who had been the means of deluding her into the hands of his perfidious party, found himself under the necessity of defending her with his drawn sword from the brutality of some of her revilers in the rebel ranks on the march to Edinburgh. Goaded almost to delirious agony by the cruelty of her treatment and the treachery of her foes, she could not refrain from reproaching the Earl of Atholl for the part he had acted, and threatening with her royal vengeance those in whose imaginary sense of honour she had confided. At times she yielded to the weakness of womanly grief, shedding floods of tears, paused on her way, overcome with the violence of her emotion, and protested that she "neither could nor would proceed another step with perjured traitors, who had violated their solemn promises to her."

[1] State Paper Office MS., June 19, 1567.

One of the party deridingly told her, "that if she were driving time in hopes of the Hamiltons coming up to aid her, it was useless, as there was not an armed man to be seen for many miles."

The conduct of Patrick Lord Lindsay of the Byres, with whom she had been associated on terms of sisterly familiarity in her childhood, for he was the son of her faithful Lord-Keeper, appears to have been more keenly felt by Mary in that hour of bitter distress than the brutality of the others. She called him to her, and bade him give her his hand. He obeyed. "By the hand that is now in yours," she exclaimed, "I will have your head for this!" "Unfortunate Princess," observes Tytler;[1] "when she spoke thus, how little did she know how soon that unrelenting hand, which had been already stained with Riccio's blood, would fall still heavier on herself." Maddened by the taunts of those who were thus adding insults to perfidy, she appears to have been reckless of what she said in that climax of her misery, and guilty of the imprudence of telling them what she thought of their conduct, both generally and individually. Du Croc tells Catharine de Medicis "that he had hoped Queen Mary would have used her wonted sweetness of manner to the Lords when she went over to them, and endeavoured, by all means in her power, to conciliate and please them;" but they assured him, on the contrary, "that on the road to Edinburgh she never spoke but to threaten them with having them all crucified and hanged, which had made them desperate."[2] Paltry excuse for the violation of those solemn promises, and on the faith of which she had put herself into their hands! There was not a man in Scotland but would have laughed at the threat of crucifixion, a punishment which had never been heard of since the days of the Roman emperors; and as for hanging, few indeed of those who accused their captive Sovereign of menacing them with the fate their reiterated treasons so well merited,

[1] History of Scotland, vol. vii. MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil.
[2] Du Croc's Letter to Queen-mother of France, June 17, 1567.

but had been indebted to her royal clemency for reprieving them either from the halter or the axe.

About nine o'clock on the evening of that woeful 15th of June, the hapless Queen was dragged into Edinburgh with every circumstance of studied indignity calculated to aggravate her distress. She was preceded by men-at-arms bearing before her the banner which had been so cunningly devised by the contrivers of her husband's murder, to fix the suspicion of their crime on her. Morton and Atholl rode on either side of her. Her dress was covered with dust; she was exhausted and fevered with fatigue and the violence of her emotion; her face was covered with tears, and so disfigured with excessive weeping that she was scarcely recognisable. The baser sort shamed not to aggravate the bitterness of her misery by hooting and railing upon her as she passed.[1] She ought not to have been surprised nor wounded overmuch by such demonstrations—

> "For the brute crowd, with fickle zeal,
> Applaud each turn of Fortune's wheel,
> And loudest shout when lowest lie
> Exalted worth and station high."

Instead of conducting her to her own palace of Holyrood, the confederate traitors, who had thus succeeded in entrapping their fatally confiding Sovereign, lodged her in the town house of her false Provost, Sir Simon Preston, a huge grim mansion called the Black Turnpike, guarded with flanking towers, battlements, and strongly fortified portal, being occasionally used as a temporary prison for untried malefactors before they were committed to the Tolbooth. It was situated in the High Street, adjoining the Tron Church. Here the unfortunate Queen, without the slightest consideration being vouchsafed either to her sex or her exalted rank, was separated from her ladies, who had courageously followed her to the prison they were not permitted to share, and inhumanly bereft of female attendance,[2] thrust into a

[1] Buchanan. Drury's Letters to Cecil. Chalmers; Bell; Tytler; Spotiswood.

[2] Document in Teulet's Collections—Pièces et Documens, vol. ii. p. 166. Buchanan; Melville; Bell; Tytler.

room fronting the noisy street, and left to pass the night without the means of bathing her fevered brow and tear-swollen eyes, or changing her travel-soiled garments. Supper was indeed placed before her; but though she had not broken her fast for upwards of four-and-twenty hours, she refused to eat.[1]

Mary was once more in the hands of the ruthless men who, after butchering her secretary, David Riccio, in her presence, had reviled, taunted, set her at nought, and left her to pass a night of agony alone. In like manner they compelled her to do so a second time without female attendance or medical care, after the day of torturing excitement and personal fatigue she had gone through. Marie Antoinette, in the Conciergerie, after her last bitter ordeal, defamed, discrowned, brow-beaten, and death-doomed, by the relentless conclave of frantic democrats who had sent her royal husband to the guillotine, was not more pitiable than Mary Stuart in the hands of the titled ruffians who called themselves noblemen and saints. It must not be forgotten that Atholl and Sempill were still members of her own Church, in which also Mar and others of the clique had been vowed priests, and still held ecclesiastical titles as bishops, priors, and commendators.

When the morning dawned, Mary showed herself at the window of the Provost's house, and cried to her people for succour. She had rent her garments in her frantic agony, and appeared with her dishevelled hair hanging wildly about her face and bosom, a spectacle which moved all the spectators of her misery to compassion,[2] save two malignant soldiers, who advanced the banner with the effigies of her murdered husband and her infant son, and held it up before her eyes. At this sight she screamed aloud, and called on the people "either to slay her, or deliver her from the cruelty of the false traitors by whom she had been deluded, and was thus barbarously treated."

Her appeal was not entirely without effect, for there were still many true hearts in Edinburgh to respond to

[1] Document in Teulet's Collections—Pièces et Documens, vol. ii. p. 166. Buchanan; Melville; Bell; Tytler.

[2] Letter of James Beton. Drury to Cecil, June 19. Chalmers.

the cry of their desolate and oppressed Queen. An indignant crowd of honest Scots gathered round the Provost's house, and declared their intention of taking her part. The loyal citizens spoke of "unfurling the Blue Blanket, and rallying the craftsmen of the good town for her rescue."[1]

Alarmed at those unexpected demonstrations of the affection of the better sort for their unfortunate Queen, the excited state of the town, and the divisions which began to rise even among themselves, the leaders of the conspiracy considered it necessary to resort to their wonted dissimulation. Grange, who had been the means of deluding her into their power, perceiving that a reaction of popular feeling was likely to take place in her favour, now thought it only decent to complain of the stain that had been thrown on his honour, by treating her as a prisoner whom they had promised to obey and reverence as their Sovereign. Whereupon, abandoning the story of their fears of a general crucifixion and hanging, they pretended "that they had intercepted a letter which the Queen had written the preceding night to Bothwell, calling him 'her dear heart,' and declaring her intention of rejoining him as soon as she could." It is needless to argue against the absurdity of any one believing that men who had deprived their royal captive of the comfort of female attendance, and every other solace which her pitiable and exhausted state required, would have granted her the indulgence of pen, ink, and paper in her prison-room, where she was rigorously guarded from the access of any living creature by Lindsay and his armed followers. Grange, however, affected to consider the bare assertion of Lethington and Morton, that they had intercepted such a letter, sufficient excuse for their violation of those solemn promises to her which they had empowered him to make, although the breach of faith was perpetrated by them several hours before it was possible for the letter to have been written, even if they had supplied her with writing materials for that purpose. It was of a piece with the rest of their fictions. They had gathered an army, declaring that it was for the loyal and chivalric object of

[1] Pennycuik's History of the Blue Blanket, p. 58.

freeing her from the cruel thraldom in which she was kept by Bothwell; and their next move in the game was to pretend that they had been deceived, for that he was the object of her fondest affection; and it was therefore necessary to depose and imprison her as soon as she had dismissed him, and thrown herself on their protection.

Six peers of Parliament, and six only, had taken it upon them to constitute their Sovereign a prisoner. They to a man were, as they ever had been, members of the English faction, and confederate with Cecil for her ruin. But Mary was still dear to the true hearts of Scotland. A vast majority among the nobles either stood neuter, like Argyll, or were avowedly on her side. A loyal army, headed by the chiefs of Hamilton and Gordon, was already in the field, and so near at hand that the traitor Sir James Balfour, though he had formed a secret pact with Morton and Lethington to deliver the Castle into their hands, delayed the performance of his promise till he should see to which side the nicely-poised balance would incline. At this critical moment, when the reaction of popular feeling was beginning to manifest itself, even in that focus of faction and fanaticism, the High Street of Edinburgh, in a most decided manner in behalf of the captive Queen, she, unluckily chancing to espy Lethington in the throng, opened the window, and, calling upon him by name, "besought him, for the love of God, to come to her." [1]

Too happy to have an opportunity of deluding her once more with his pernicious counsel, he obeyed, and in reply to her passionate reproaches, and entreaties for aid in her present sore distress, soothed her with deceitful assurances of his attachment, telling her "that the Lords were very much her friends, and ready to do everything she could desire, if she would show herself of an amicable and conciliatory temper to them," imputing all the ill-treatment of which she complained to her angry expressions. Mary, who must have possessed the most placable temper in the world, was only too easily pacified, and consented to see Morton, Atholl, and their confederates. They came to her with soft and

[1] Letter of Du Croc. Melville's Memoirs.

penitential speeches, expressing their regret for the unfortunate misunderstanding that had occurred, declared that they had no intention of putting the slightest constraint on her person, and promising to conduct her to her own palace, reinstate her in her regal authority, and leave her at full liberty to exercise it as she pleased, provided only that she would dismiss the mob who had assembled round the house.[1] In evil moment for herself, Mary was induced to speak from the window to her honest champions of low degree, assured them "she was under no constraint, and requested them to disperse, and return peaceably to their own homes. Her ladies were then permitted to come to her, she was allowed to change her dress, and invited to take some sort of refreshment; but because she found herself, in consequence of her long fast and the agitation of her spirits, unable to swallow a morsel of animal food, the report was circulated "that she had made a vow not to taste flesh till she saw the Earl of Bothwell again."[2]

Edinburgh was in a tumultuous and excited state the whole day; and the Queen remained in the Provost's house a strictly-guarded prisoner, notwithstanding the renewed assurances of duty and allegiance she had received from the confederate Lords in the morning. It was not till nine o'clock that evening, after she had spent many long hours of agonising suspense, that they thought proper to perform their promise of conducting her to Holyrood. They performed it in a manner characteristic of themselves, for she was led thither between Morton and Atholl, not as their Queen, but their captive, on foot, guarded with files of soldiers, and exposed, as on the preceding night, to the brutal insults of the rabble. Several women, who were sitting on the fore-stairs of the houses in the Canongate to see her pass, reviled her by the most opprobrious epithets, a circumstance that has been recorded with exultation by her adversaries,[3] as if any argument of her guilt were derivable from the unfeminine conduct of those who could

[1] Du Croc to Charles IX., in Teulet, vol. ii. Bell's Life of Mary Queen of Scots.

[2] French Document in Teulet, vol. ii. p. 167.

[3] Buchanan; Laing; Melville.

thus violate the holy charities and tender instincts of woman's nature, by aggravating her affliction with their unprovoked insults. None but females of the vilest class were capable of acting a part like this; for when were modest maids or virtuous matrons ever known to lift up their voices in the public streets, and unite in the railings and execrations of a savage mob? But Mary Stuart, even in that most direful climax of her misery, was not deserted by the high and excellent of her own sex. Mary Seton, on whose name not even the malignity of political slander ever succeeded in fixing a stain, was in close attendance on her person, together with Mary Livingstone,[1] whose husband, John Sempill, was the son of one of the confederate Lords. These two ladies, having been witnesses of the most private actions and sentiments of their royal mistress from her childhood upwards, afforded silent but courageous testimony to her integrity, by voluntarily partaking with her the horrors of this hour of surpassing bitterness and its perils, for nothing had been left undone by Morton and his accomplices calculated to excite the fury of a fanatic mob to acts of personal violence against their defenceless Queen. The cunningly-devised banner was displayed, and was again the signal for imprecatory cries of "Burn her! Drown her!" accompanied with fiend-like yells and terms of foul abuse.

Mary had swooned, had wept, and passionately reproached the authors of these outrages on the preceding night, but their repetition roused her royal spirit, and she boldly appealed to the people, even while they were rendering themselves the blind instruments of the traitor Lords, who had thus shamelessly violated their solemn promises to her a second time within the last four-and-twenty hours. "I am innocent!" she intrepidly exclaimed. "I have done nothing worthy of blame. Why am I handled thus, seeing I am a true Princess and your native Sovereign? You are deceived by false traitors. Good Christian people, either take my life or free me from their cruelty." "She bore her undauntedly,"

[1] Teulet's Pièces et Documens, vol. ii. p. 167.

continues our authority,[1] "protesting, as she always doth, her innocency, with tears in her eyes and passionate words addressing herself to the people, who were thronging her, and appeared highly commoved at the cries that were raised on the causeway." A French contemporary mentions "that she was accompanied by Mademoiselles Seton and Sempill, with others of her chamber, following her very close,"[2] ready, good, faithful creatures! to die for her or with her. Among the ladies who walked in that sad procession must have been Madame Courcelles, Jane Kennedy, and Mademoiselle Rallay, who shared her imprisonment at Lochleven, and afterwards for long weary years in England. Mary "was apparelled," we are told, "in a night-gown," or evening dress, of "variable colours:"[3] this was probably a tartan robe of the royal pattern.

The distance between the Black Turnpike and Holyrood Abbey is so short that it might easily be traversed in ten minutes, but the studied barbarity of the confederate Lords converted it into a painful and tedious pilgrimage to their liege lady, whom they exposed to public curiosity and contumely, even more insultingly than if she had been the victim of a Roman triumph. Their object was apparently to inflame the fanatic rabble to tear her limb from limb, before she could reach the sanctuary of her own palace. From this frightful fate the presence and close proximity of her faithful ladies possibly preserved her. But though the baser sort of men and the unwomanly furies of the Canongate, which was the headquarters of the confederate Lords and their military force, united in reviling and clamouring for the blood of their defenceless Queen, she had still too many friends in Edinburgh not to cause some alarm to her persecutors. They were told "that the common people did greatly pity her Majesty, and heavily bemoaned her calamity;"[4] and they knew that a numerous body of more powerful sympathisers might hourly be expected, in which case they might perhaps find themselves in a greater

[1] MS. Letter from Drury to Cecil—Border Correspondence, June 1567.
[2] Teulet, vol. ii. p. 167. [3] Ibid. [4] Spotiswood.

dilemma than at Mary's previous restoration to her regal authority, when she escaped from their cruel hands after the assassination of David Riccio. They therefore resolved to send her out of Edinburgh without delay, and imprison her in the castle of Lochleven, placing her under the jailorship of the mother of the Earl of Moray, and her son Sir William Douglas. The woman who was chosen for this ungracious office was the sister of the Earl of Mar, and had been the mistress of Queen Mary's father, King James V. She had been married to Sir Robert Douglas, the Laird of Lochleven, cousin to the Earl of Morton, by whom she was the mother of three sons and seven daughters, one of whom was the wife of Patrick Lord Lindsay of the Byres. Lindsay was associated, together with Lord Ruthven and Sir William Douglas, by Morton, Mar, Glencairn, and the other confederates, in the warrant for the removing and incarceration of the person of their sovereign lady in the fortress of Lochleven.[1] As soon as the warrant was drawn up and signed, poor Mary was inhumanly roused from the repose her wearied frame and sorely harassed spirit so much required, by Lindsay and Ruthven, two ruffians well suited for the cruel office they had undertaken, and compelled to quit her bed at dead of night, to commence her long journey.

One moment of privacy, and one alone, her Majesty contrived to snatch with one of her faithful damsels, whom she drew with her into her cabinet, before she allowed herself to be hurried away from her own royal house for ever. This damsel she commanded, or rather prayed, "either to write or send some sure messenger to the Captain of Edinburgh Castle, and desire him to keep a good heart to her, and, wheresoever she might be carried or sent, not to render the Castle to the Lords who had broken their faith to her."[2] Alas for Mary! Little did she know that Sir James Balfour, the villain to whom she sent this message, indicative

[1] This warrant is dated June 16, 1567. The original is in the possession of the Earl of Morton, at Dalmahoy House, where I have been favoured with the sight of it.

[2] James Beton's Letter.

of her own high courage in the midst of perils present and perils undefined to come, as well as her reliance on his loyalty, was the secret confederate with the contract-breakers who had beguiled her into their web,—that he had been art and part with them in the murder of her husband, and was one of the conspiracy for dethroning her, and crowning her infant son, of which that crime was an indispensable preliminary.

Uncertain whither she was to be carried, or for what purpose, Mary was hastily enveloped from head to foot in a coarse riding-cloak and hood of russet cloth, so as to disguise her person and quality, dragged from her chamber by Lindsay, Ruthven, and a band of men-at-arms, mounted on horseback, and conducted to the water's side, and, in spite of her reluctance, transported to the other side in a vessel that was provided for that purpose. She was then placed in the saddle again, and compelled to proceed for several hours. The early dawn revealed the well-known outline of the western Lomonds and Benarty's giant form, rising like a stern barrier high in air in the foreground, when the cavalcade halted, after a circuitous sweep, on the margin of the broad blue waters of Lochleven. Mary then perceived that she was to be warded in the same fortress that had been selected as the place of her life-long incarceration by the conspirators two years before, if they had not been frustrated in their original plot for surprising her and Darnley at the Parenwell, slaughtering him and imprisoning her. The first object of that league—the murder of Darnley—was now accomplished. The traitors, though baffled more than once in their designs, were at last triumphant, and with greater prospect of permanent success than in June 1565, since they were now in possession of an infant heir to the Crown, under whose name they might usurp the sovereignty of Scotland,—the security of this royal infant's person, endangered, as they asserted, by the inordinate affection of the Queen for the murderer of his father, and the punishment of that murder, being the pretences alleged.

The Register of Privy Council bears record, June 16, 1567, the same day on which they signed the warrant

for the Queen's imprisonment on the above pretences, that these men framed a document entitled "A Bond of Concurrence," wherein they declare that Bothwell "treasonably, without fear of God or reverence for the person of his native Prince, *umbeset*[1] her Majesty's way, seized her most noble person, and led her away with him to Dunbar Castle, there detaining her prisoner and captive." They rehearsed the illegality of his divorce and marriage to the Queen, and "how no nobleman nor other durst resort to her Majesty to speak with her, nor procure their lawful business without suspicion, her chamber doors being continually watched with men of war." In language still stronger they thus proceed: "We, although too late, began to consider the estate, and to take heed to ourselves, but specially to the preservation of the life of the fatherless Prince, the only son and righteous heir-apparent of our Sovereign, her Highness's shameful thraldom and bondage with the said Earl, and with that foresaw the great danger which the Prince stood in, whereas the murderer of his father, the ravisher of the Queen his mother, was clad with the principal strengths of the realm, and garnished with a guard of waged men, and now in all appearance he might oppress and destroy that innocent infant as he had done his father, and so, by tyranny and cruel deeds, at last to usurp the royal crown and supreme government of this realm. At last, in the fear and name of God, and in the lawful obedience of our Sovereign, moved and constrained by the just occasions above written, we have taken arms to revenge the said horrible and cruel murder upon the said Earl of Bothwell and others, authors and devisers, and to deliver our Sovereign forth of his hands."[2] What evidence can be more positive of the constraint to which Mary had been subjected from Bothwell, than this declaration of the very men who sent her as a prisoner to Lochleven? Nor is this either the first or the last of their declarations to the same effect.

[1] This word means, to impede or beset any one's path with armed men.
[2] Anderson's Collections.

It is, after all, to the documents published by her calumniators and her foes that Mary is indebted for her justification. The quotation of a few lines from a satirical contemporary's poem on the deposition of Queen Mary, in consequence of her marriage with Bothwell, and the conduct of the conspirators, may not be considered inappropriate. The author, who veils his real name under the quaint signature of Tom Truth, has chosen the popular form of an historical ballad for his verses. Forgotten as it now is, it made a very strong impression at the period on the Scotch and English: it was rigorously prohibited by Cecil, who has indorsed with his own hand the original copy, which is still preserved in our State Paper Office, "A Poem in favour of the Scottish Queen, and against the Earl of Moray." It commences with comparisons between Richard the Third and the Earl of Moray, charging the latter with being the contriver of Darnley's murder and the defamer of the Queen, glancing withal at the priestly breeding of Moray in terms which mark the author to be of the Reformed religion.

"Who trained up was in the school of lying Satan's grace,
Where he hath learned a finer feat than Richard's erst did see,
To do the deed and lay the blame on them that harmless be;
For he and his companions eke, agreeing all in one,
Did kill the King and lay the blame the *sackless*[1] Queen upon.

. . . . . .

For if (they) both at once had murdered been that time,
Then might each babe with half an eye have spied who did the crime.
And this suspicion to increase they found a new devise;
For Bothwell, chiefest murderer, when tried by assize,
And found 'Not Guilty' by his peers, of whom the chiefest be
Such as the King's death did conspire, and knew as well as he.
They cleared him eke by Parliament, O traitors false and vile,
That they their good and virtuous Queen might sooner so beguile;
And when that he was cleared at once by Size and Parliament,
To marry him forthwith they went to cause her to consent.

. . . . . .

But when the woeful wedding-day was finished and past,
Their boiling malice that lay hid in raging sort outburst,
And they that were of council both to murdering of the King
And to the marriage, 'gan to spread' that Bothwell did the thing;

[1] Guiltless.

And how he took away the Queen by force against her will,
And sought himself to reign as King. . . . . .
But when among the simple sort this rumour once was brought,
It ran abroad from place to place more swift than can be thought;
And those not privy to the plot did therefore deem most sure,
That she, to wed the murderer, the murder did procure."[1]

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[1] This poem was considered important enough to be made the subject of Privy Council investigation. Our old acquaintance Tom Bishop was carried off to the Tower, and examined very severely regarding the authorship and the handwriting.—Cotton., Calig., l. i. p. 296.

MARY STUART

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SUMMARY.

Queen Mary's unavailing resistance to her incarceration in Lochleven Castle —Enterprise of loyal nobles and lairds for her rescue—She is forced into the boat by Lindsay and Ruthven, and incarcerated in the castle—Local features of the island and castle of Lochleven—Her royal apartments and furniture there—Her prison lodgings—Insolent treatment of Queen Mary by Lady Douglas of Lochleven—Mary writes an indignant reproach to Kirkaldy of Grange—His prevaricative reply—Falsehoods asserted of her by Lethington—Treasonable correspondence of the rebel Lords with Queen Elizabeth and Cecil—Mary's jewels, dresses, and plate seized by the rebel Lords—Suitors for Mary's hand—French King sends to comfort her—She is not permitted to see his envoy—Perfidy of the Earl of Moray—Queen Elizabeth's astute conduct—Her intrigues to get possession of Mary's son — Mary resists the snare — Sir Robert Melville visits Mary—She complains of her want of clothes—Articles of wearing apparel delivered to her—Her message to the rebel Lords—Their murderous designs against her—Knox reviles her from the pulpit—Requires her blood—Mary becomes calm—Tries to cheer her ladies—Her needlework—Rebel Lords resolve to make her resign her crown—Sir Robert tries to beguile and Lindsay to intimidate her into signing the instruments of abdication—She refuses and remonstrates—Brutal language and ruffianly behaviour of Lindsay—Her forced abdication (see Vignette) —Dangerous attack of illness—Her sorrowful parting from Lady Moray —Rebel Lords resolve to crown Mary's infant son—Her life in peril— Affectionate letter of Darnley's mother to Queen Mary.

It was not without resistance that Queen Mary permitted herself to be incarcerated in Lochleven Castle; for local tradition, which in that instance may well be credited, affirms that when the cavalcade halted on the edge of the lake, and she was desired to step into the boat, she positively refused to do so. Resistance was, however, unavail-

ing, for she was in the hands of homicides who had already shed blood in her presence, and scrupled not to accomplish by ruffian force the dastardly office they had undertaken. Had they been less prompt and determined in their proceedings, they would probably have been overtaken and slain; for the Lords Seton, Yester, and Borthwick, having got an intimation that the conspirators were sending the Queen as a prisoner to Lochleven Castle, had mounted with the Lairds of Waughton, Bass, Langton, David Home of Wedderburn, and his uncle John Blackadder, at the head of a numerous and well-armed body of followers, and followed hard and fast upon their traces, in the hope of effecting her rescue. The race was sharply run; but in spite of all the Queen's delays and resistance, Lindsay and Ruthven had succeeded in getting her into the boat, and rowing her across the lake to the castle before these loyal cavaliers reached the water's edge.[1] When the sternly-guarded portals of that grim fortress had once closed upon her, and she was consigned to the vigilant keeping of the haughty paramour of the late King her father, Lady Douglas, small must have appeared the prospect of her deliverance.

Lochleven Castle, where Mary was doomed to spend so many weary months in anguish and bitterness of heart, is situated on an island, about five acres in extent, which rises from a wild expanse of deep and often stormy waters, twelve, but at that period, as some suppose, fifteen miles in circumference, and is upwards of half a mile from the shore at the nearest point of approach. The castle is at present a desolate ruin, the little island overgrown with brushwood, and the haunt of herons and waterfowl. In the midst of the tangled wilderness, tradition long pointed out one ancient stem of fantastic growth, called Queen Mary's Thorn, said to have been planted by the illustrious prisoner as a memorial of her compulsory residence in Lochleven Castle. Its boughs, as long as a stick remained, were constantly broken off and carried away by the nume-

[1] Adam Blackwood's Life of Queen Mary. Keith. Fairbairn.

rous visitors whom the romantic interest attached to the history of this beautiful and unfortunate Princess attracts to the spot; but it was recently uprooted by a storm of wind. The old tower of the castle is of such extreme antiquity that it is supposed to have been built by Congal, a Pictish king. It was a royal demesne, a suite of apartments being reserved for the Sovereign's use on particular occasions, such as hawking and fishing. Queen Mary, when engaged in her favourite sylvan pastimes in the neighbourhood, had been accustomed to transact business and sleep in Lochleven Castle; several of her Acts of Council and letters are dated there. These apartments, as well as those occupied by Lady Douglas and her numerous progeny, were of more modern date and architecture, situated in a part of the edifice which in Queen Mary's days was called the New House. Mary had fitted up the royal apartments in Lochleven Castle for her own use, soon after her return from France, in accordance with her own elegant taste. Her presence-chamber and bedroom were hung with ten pieces of tapestry, descriptive of the histories of hunting and hawking. Her bed was of green velvet, made in the fashion of a chapel, fringed with green silk, with a counterpane of stitched green taffety. Her board-cloth was of green velvet, lined with green taffety; her regal canopy, or cloth-of-estate, covered with crimson satin figured with gold, and its draperies fringed with gold and crimson silk.[1] A beautiful ebony canapé, or small sofa, as well as the chairs honoured by her use at Lochleven, are in the possession of the Earl of Morton, at Dalmahoy House, in very fine preservation.

Queen Mary's prison lodgings were in the south-eastern tower of Lochleven Castle, to which the only approach was through the guarded quadrangle, enclosed within lofty stone walls. These apartments are still in existence. The presence-chamber of the captive Sovereign is circular in form, fifteen feet in diameter, and forty-five in circumference, the ceiling

[1] Royal Wardrobe Book of Queen Mary, privately printed by the late T. Thomson, Esq. of Shrubhill.

being very low. The window commands a fine view of the loch and surrounding mountains. Lochleven is studded with three other little isles. On that called St Serf's Inch was a small Culdee religious station, and the ruins of the priory said to have been founded by King Achaicus. A prospect of these could be obtained by Queen Mary from her bedroom window, and, when she took the air, from the top of the tower. She had the picturesque range of the Lomonds sloping down nearly to the shores of the loch on her left, the Bishop's Hill in front, and Benarty rearing its steep barrier to the south; the only vestige of the habitation of man being the then inconsiderable village of Kinross, on the low-lying plain to the north-east. How often must poor Mary's tearful eyes have ached with the vain endeavour of piercing the misty distance beyond the wild boundaries of her isolated prison.[1]

Ill and exhausted as Mary was, with loss of rest, personal fatigue, and mental misery, when she reached her lugubrious prison-house her high spirit did not desert her. The bitterest aggravation to her distress was the insolence of the bold bad woman to whose society and impertinent espionage she was now condemned. Instead of treating her with the respect due to her exalted rank and station, Lady Douglas received her hapless Sovereign with taunts,

[1] A model of Lochleven Castle, as it was in the reign of her son, James I. of Great Britain, about fifty years after Queen Mary's imprisonment there, is still in existence, in the possession of the Marquess of Breadalbane, at Taymouth Castle, through whose courtesy I have been favoured with a drawing of the elevation and ground-plan of the same, executed by Sir Archibald Campbell, to whom my thanks are also due.

And here it is impossible to refrain from recording a pleasing trait of generous feeling displayed by David Marshal, tacksman of the Lochleven fishery, cooper, and proprietor of the boats employed in transporting visitors to and from Lochleven Castle; for after he and his two men had rowed me and my party to the island, battled with a rough ground-swell which made our passage very laborious, tarried my leisure while making local investigations and notes for this painful chapter of Mary Stuart's biography, and had safely landed me on the shores of Kinross, he stoutly refused to accept his five-shilling fee, or any reward whatsoever, because he had gathered from the conversation that I was writing Queen Mary's Life. It was in vain that my friend's coachman took him aside, and, producing a one-pound note Scotch, told him "that his lady, Mrs Skene of Pitlour, with whom I was on a visit, had given private orders to him to pay all expenses." David

telling her she "was only a usurper, and that her son, the Earl of Moray, was rightful King of Scotland, and the legitimate heir of King James V." "He is too honest to say so himself," was Mary's calm rejoinder to this outrageous boast; and it is certain that Moray, though he used the regal signature James after his assumption of the regency, never ventured to assert his legitimacy—the fact that he was born after his mother's marriage to Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven being too notorious for such a pretence to be tolerated.

Queen Mary's first step was to write an indignant letter to Kirkaldy of Grange, reproaching him with the unworthy part he had acted, in persuading her to confide in the promises of the faithless traitors by whom she had been thus shamefully treated. He answered, "that he had already reproached the Lords for the same, who showed him a writing sent by her to the Earl of Bothwell, promising, among many other fair and comfortable words, never to abandon nor forget him; which, if it were written by her Majesty, as he could scarcely believe, had stopped his mouth."[1] If such a letter had been shown to Grange, it is certain that he would have insisted on its being made public for his own sake, as well as to colour the proceedings of his party—not that it could have saved his honour even if it had been produced and verified as Mary's genuine letter, since the conditions which he had solemnly guaranteed to her, as the accredited agent of the confederate Lords, had been violated before it was possible for her to

Marshal put the proffered guerdon aside with a determined air, saying, "No, I will not take money for this job from any one: I must be permitted to have the pleasure of rendering this little service to that lady for Queen Mary's sake." "Then," said I, "you would have lent a hand to deliver Queen Mary from her prison, if you had lived in her day?"—"Ay, and I would have died for her!" he replied, grasping his oar with expressive energy as he spoke.

Who shall say the age of chivalry exists no longer, when sentiments of so ennobling a character animate the true hearts of the industrial classes of old Scotia! As a matter of course, David Marshal and his mates were requested to accompany the coachman to the inn, refresh themselves, and drink my health; but the charge was very trifling, for David is a "teetotaller," and could not be prevailed on by the others to imbibe any potation stronger than ginger-pop.

[1] Melville's Memoirs.

have had an opportunity of writing it. Had he not seen her, immediately after she had, in compliance with his persuasions, left Bothwell, dismissed her army, and put herself into the hands of those guileful traitors who had promised to demean themselves as the most loving and dutiful of her subjects, treated by them and their followers with the most intolerable outrages, irritated to temporary madness by their taunts and cruelty, dragged into Edinburgh with every species of indignity, and lodged in the Black Turnpike, a prison appropriated to the vilest of felons, and the next day exposed to a fresh series of injuries and the insults of the furies of the Canongate? Yet he continued to act with them, and quoted the shallow fiction devised by Lethington as an excuse for their perfidy. They had declared to the whole world that it was to deliver the Queen from the cruel thraldom of Bothwell they had taken up arms; and now when she, deceived by their proclamations and professions, had come to them as to her champions and deliverers, they endeavoured to justify their ill-treatment of her by pretending that she was art and part in all Bothwell's crimes, and was intoxicated with love for him. Lethington even tried to persuade Du Croc that when his hapless Sovereign called upon him in her agony, from the window of the Provost's house, to come to her succour, it was only to complain of being separated from Bothwell, and that she had said "it was her desire that they two might be put into a ship alone, to go whithersoever fortune might carry them."[1]

Du Croc, in communicating to the Queen-mother of France what had passed between him and Lethington, on the subject of her royal daughter-in-law, drily observes, "Yet the said Lethington at other times has told me, 'that from the day after her nuptials she has never ceased from tears and lamentations, and that he, Bothwell, would neither allow her to see any one nor any one to see her.'"[2] Monsieur Mignet has, however, related the conversation which Lethington pretended took place between the Queen and

[1] Du Croc to the Queen-mother of France, June 17, 1567. Teulet's Collections, vol. ii. pp. 169, 170.

[2] Ibid.

him in the Provost's house, as if it had been an undisputed fact, instead of the unverified assertion of the traitor who had given so many proofs of his falsehood by his perfidious conduct towards his confiding Sovereign. "Yourselves," wrote Randolph subsequently, in a letter addressed jointly to Lethington and Kirkaldy of Grange, twitting them with their villanies against their native Sovereign in the hour of her direst distress, "wrote against her, fought against her, and were the chiefest cause of her apprehension, imprisonment, and the demission of her crown, with somewhat more that we might say, if it were not to grieve you too much therein. But plainness argueth friendship, and so do I trust ye take it: so that you two were the chief occasions of all the calamities, as she saith, that she hath fallen into. You, Lord of Lethington, by your persuasion and counsel to apprehend her, to imprison her, yea, to have taken presently the life from her; and you, Lord of Grange, by your solicitation, travail, and labour, to bring in others to allow thereof, and to put in execution that which by you, Lord of Lethington, was devised."[1]

Kirkaldy of Grange, eight days before Queen Mary was joined by the Protestant Bishop of Orkney (a member of the conspiracy against her person and government) in marriage with Bothwell, had written to Bedford, communicating the plot for the projected revolution, assuring him "that Queen Mary had caused the font which Queen Elizabeth sent as a baptismal present to be broken up and

[1] Strypo's Annals, Appendix, No. ix. Surely, if our accomplished French contemporary had seen this document he would not have attached any weight to Lethington's report of Queen Mary's sayings in regard to Bothwell, or anything else; for in history, the credibility of the evidence depends no less on the characters and motives of the parties by whom it has been derived, than in a court of justice on those of the witnesses. Nor must the fact be forgotten, that Lethington was one of the principal contrivers of Darnley's murder. Morton, in a letter to their mutual friend the Laird of Carmichael, states, in plain words, "that he knew Lethington to be guilty of the King's death from his own declaration, Lethington having shown it to him beforehand." And is the testimony of men like these to be quoted as evidence against their royal victim? As reasonably might the statements of Courvoisier, and the subtleties of his legal defender, have been allowed to shift the burden and the penalty of the murder of Lord William Russell from the actual murderer to the innocent female servants against whom the fallacies of circumstantial evidence were artfully pointed.

coined into five thousand crowns, to raise soldiers for her defence." He added this important sentence—"It will please your lordship also to haste these other letters to my Lord of Moray, and write unto him to come back again into Normandy, that he may be in readiness against my lords write unto him."[1] Documentary evidence is thus afforded of three things which all the argument in the world cannot gainsay, namely, the treachery and falsehood of Grange, the confederacy of the English government in the plot for Mary's deposition, and that it was a settled thing that the Earl of Moray was to supersede her in the government of Scotland. His going abroad for a few weeks was only to blind his royal sister to the fact that he was at the head of the conspiracy.

The day after Queen Mary's incarceration in Lochleven Castle, the confederate Lords seized all her plate, jewels, dresses, and costly furniture in Holyrood House, and sent her plate, including the said christening-font presented by Queen Elizabeth to their infant Prince, to the Mint, to be coined into money to pay the military force they were using against her.[2] Glencairn entered her chapel-royal with his servants, broke down the altars, and demolished the carving, ornaments, and pictures, some of which were of great beauty and value. Her French servants, whom Bothwell had threatened to discharge, found themselves in no better case than if he had been able to fulfil his intention, for they were driven out in a destitute condition, and besieged the house of Du Croc, their countryman, with doleful cries for food.[3] He provided for them by breaking open a coffer containing four thousand crowns, which the Queen had confided to his keeping for her own use, with several silver vessels, which he sold, and with the proceeds hired a ship, and sent them back to their own country. Mindful of the instructions he had received from Catharine de Medicis and her Cabinet, he was careful to keep on civil terms with the confederate

[1] MS. Letter from Grange to Bedford, May 7, 1567—State Paper Office Correspondence. [2] Chalmers; Knox; Tytler.
[3] Du Croc to Charles IX., in Teulet, vol. ii.

Lords, and not to manifest his sympathy in too decided a manner for Mary.

It is a notorious fact that, after all the proclamations and specious professions of the conspirators that their motive in taking up arms was to deliver their Queen from the restraint in which she was held by Bothwell, and to punish him for the murder of Darnley, they made no attempt to capture him;[1] their real object being, as their conduct proves, to get the person of the Queen into their own hands, and then to deprive her of her throne and liberty, by charging on her the crime, with regard to which Bothwell, if brought to trial, could have given convincing evidence of their participation and foreknowledge of it. It was not, indeed, till the 26th of June, ten days after the Queen's surrender, that they even troubled themselves to perform the ceremony of making a proclamation rehearsing his misdemeanours, and offering the reward of a thousand crowns for his apprehension;[2] and it was a month later before they put him to the horn. Bothwell meantime remained perfectly unmolested at Dunbar, within twenty miles of Edinburgh, where he held a council to consider the means of delivering the Queen from her present durance,[3] which was attended by twelve earls, eighteen lords, and a number of titular bishops and abbots;[4] but no effectual measures were adopted, for the disgust his conduct had created, prevented her faithful friends from coalescing with him under any circumstances. The great nobles withdrew to Hamilton, forming themselves into a third party for the Queen, and her alone, independently of any connection with him.[5] Thus divided, they were not strong enough to enterprise anything for her relief by force of arms, relying rather on negotiations, protests, and the meeting of a free Parliament, to which Mary had declared she desired to refer herself. She flattered herself that all the sovereigns of Europe would make common cause with her, and if they combined not for her deliverance, they would at least use such remonstrances as might induce her rebellious subjects to restore her to liberty, and reinstate her in her regal authority. She

[1] Chalmers; Bell; Goodall.
[2] Diurnal of Occurrents.
[3] Bothwell's Memorial.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Keith.

fancied herself secure, at any rate, of the assistance of France, her old ally, and her kindred of Lorraine; but her reliance was on broken reeds. The Queen-mother of France, who had never loved her, was playing her own deep game with the Huguenot leaders, and they had satisfied their friend the Earl of Moray that no interference in Mary's favour need be apprehended. The young King, indeed, at the first news of her captivity, manifested lively feelings of sympathy for his unfortunate sister-in-law; and with the trustful simplicity of an inexperienced youth, sent for the Earl of Moray, and asked his assistance in her behalf, declaring "that he would do much to get both the Scottish Queen and her son over to Paris, where he would protect them both." He offered to make Moray a Knight of St Michael, his own order, and to endow him with large lands and living, if he could bring this enterprise to pass."[1] Little did he know of the paladin whose aid he invoked. Moray was only waiting the fiat of Elizabeth and Cecil to make his appearance on the scene as sovereign *de facto* of Scotland.[2]

The triumphant faction in whose hands Mary was at this time, refused to allow M. de Villeroy, the new envoy from the Court of France, who had just arrived, either to see or communicate with her, although his principal business was to counsel her to have her marriage with Bothwell set aside;

[1] Letter of Sir Henry Norris to Queen Elizabeth—in Stevenson's Illustrations.

[2] Indisputable proof of the secret league between the English Cabinet and Moray for this purpose is also to be found in Cecil's correspondence with Sir Henry Norris, the English ambassador at Paris. In a letter, dated June 26, he writes to that diplomatist: "At this time I send unto you certain packets of letters, left here by Mr Melvin (Sir Robert Melville), who lately came hither from the Queen of Scots. The sending of these to my Lord of Moray requireth great haste, whereof you may not make the Scottish ambassador privy." The faithful Beton, Archbishop of Glasgow, was not a member of the confederacy against his hapless Sovereign; not him, therefore, but the notorious Robert Stuart, the assassin of the president Minard, was recommended by Cecil as the proper person through whom the speedy despatch of the treasonable Scotch letters to Moray might be arranged. He adds, "that Moray's return into Scotland was much desired, and wishes, for the weal both of England and Scotland, he were there." Again he writes, "If my Lord of Moray were to lack credit or money, my Lord Steward would have his son give him such credit as he hath himself."—Cabala.

and to propose a more suitable consort to her consideration. The candidate for her hand was the Sieur D'Albret, a prince of the blood-royal of France and Navarre.[1] Two of her own subjects were also aspirants for this honour,—one being the second son of her kinsman the Duke of Châtelherault, the other the brother of the Earl of Argyll. But Mary had had enough, and more than enough, of the perplexing paths of matrimony, and declared to those about her "that she could be well contented either to retire to a nunnery in France, or to pass the rest of her life in seclusion with her beloved grandmother, the old Duchess de Guise."[2]

Villeroy and Du Croc both left Edinburgh on their return for France the last week in June, without being permitted to communicate with the captive Queen either personally or by letter.[3] She anxiously awaited the return of her accredited envoy, Sir Robert Melville, from England; but if she had anticipated comfort from that quarter, she was only the more painfully disappointed. Instead of performing his duty to her, he had acted as the agent of the conspirators, by recommending their cause to Queen Elizabeth, and soliciting money to assist them in their treason. The first thing he did on his return to Edinburgh, after conferring with Morton, Lethington, and the leading members of the confederacy, who had now assumed the name of the Lords of the Secret Council, was to write to Cecil a letter which fully corroborates the complicity of that minister and the English Sovereign in the whole scheme of iniquity, by the successful working of which the fall of the rival British Queen was accomplished. Commencing compliments and humble thanks from the confederate Lords both to Cecil and Elizabeth, "for their good disposition and advice," being duly made, the guileful diplomatist adds: "Before my coming, the Lords did write divers instructions unto me, besides a letter written to the Queen's Majesty [Elizabeth] subscribed by them.

[1] Labanoff. Teulet, vol. ii., Appendix—Throckmorton to Cecil.
[2] Letter of Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth.
[3] Diurnal of Occurrents. Tytler.

The effect thereof was, that as they did understand by me of the good inclination — your mistress and Council being addicted to help them in their most need—so, for their parts, their good-will to do her Majesty's [not their own Queen, but Elizabeth] service before all other with time shall be declared. The Lords presently need but money, for they have already listed divers men of war, and *is* taking up more. Wherefore, sir, it is most needful that with all expedition money may be procured of the Queen your sovereign, and sent thither with Sir Nicholas Fragmaton, or by some of the borders, for that necessity they will be put to will be within eight or ten days, which I thought meet to advertise your honour of." [1]

The trusty knight thus suggested by Sir Robert Melville as the best person to be intrusted with the safe delivery of the English gold to the Scottish traitors, who were selling the honour of their Queen and country to "the ancient enemy," was Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the agent whom Elizabeth was about to send to Scotland, accredited with the sacred name of an ambassador, under the pretext of comforting her distressed cousin, and mediating an accommodation between her and her jailors; but in reality to deprive Mary of the chance of ever contesting the crown of England with her, endeavour to get the infant Prince into her own hands, and reduce the hitherto free and formidable realm of Scotland into an English province, to be ruled by a Scotch viceroy, under the name of Regent, for the baby King.[2]

Sir Robert Melville tells Cecil that the Lord of Lethington, being very busy just then, desired him to say "that the Queen his sovereign, Elizabeth, might rest content with the conference that had been between them;" significantly adding, "He does well like of your advice on divers heads, always there is enough probable *to proceed upon that matter we first agreed upon*, and farther is thought expedient. Ye shall with diligence be advertised, and refer the rest to my Lord of Lethington's letter, who does repose

[1] MS. Letter of Sir Robert Melville to Sir W. Cecil, July 1, 1567—State Paper Office Correspondence. [2] Ibid.

himself upon the care he hopes your honour will continue in for to set forward their honourable enterprise; and the Lords, for their part, will accord with your ambassador to keep the Prince, and to her Highness's desire will put him in the custody of her Majesty, if at any time hereafter they shall be minded to suffer him to go in any other country."[1] Lethington himself writes to Cecil the same day, "Having conferred with Mr Melville since his return, I perceive as well the continuance of your constant friendship towards me in particular, as your allowance of this common quarrel, enterprised by a good number of our noblemen, for recovery of the honour of this country, almost lost for that shameful murder in the same committed, and not punished."[2] Of that Lethington himself was a notable instance; but, bold in his impunity, the caitiff shamelessly proceeds in flattering strain to his worthy correspondent: "For which your good disposition I praise God, and do most heartily thank you. I do also understand by his report that the Queen's Majesty, your mistress, is most gently inclined to allow of the justice of our cause, and by her countenance to advance the same." After glancing at the possibility of gratifying Queen Elizabeth at some future time, by putting the person of the infant Prince into her hands, he thus proceeds: "If any come here from the Queen's Majesty, he will understand more to this effect of themselves, as of all other purposes tending to your Sovereign's contentation. For our cause, I take it to be, by God's help, in good surety, so that within the realm we fear no party, unless they be set out by the Queen's substance, or foreign support by money. We have, to prevent that danger, levied some companies of harquebussiers by common contribution, the entertaining whereof will be the greatest difficulty we will have in our whole cause. I pray you we may, for the relief of the noblemen, who are willing enough according to their ability, find some comfort at the Queen's Majesty's hands of money—which being accorded, the game, I doubt nothing, is done. Marry, whatsoever it shall please her Majesty to grant, being less, and suddenly

[1] MS. Letter of Sir Robert Melville to Sir W. Cecil, July 1, 1567—State Paper Office Correspondence. [2] Stevenson's Illustrations, 182, 183.

conveyed hither, shall do more profit than a great deal more may do hereafter, if it be long a-coming."[1]

When Melville, with consent of his confederates, proceeded to Lochleven to deliver the letter and deceitful messages of amity, of which he was the bearer, from her good sister of England, Mary's three jailors, Lord Ruthven, Lord Lindsay, and his brother-in-law Sir William Douglas, insisted on being present, in consequence of the orders they received from the Lords of Secret Council. Mary indignantly remonstrated against their insolent intrusion, "which she said prevented her from entering into private conference with her servant."[2] This restriction was only a farce cleverly got up for the purpose of impressing her with the idea that Melville was devoted to her cause, in order to induce her to speak her mind the more freely to him. So the next time he came to Lochleven he was permitted to see her alone. But Mary, instead of conversing with him on affairs of state, eagerly besought him to obtain a needful supply of raiment for herself and her ladies, of which they were almost destitute. False as he was to her as a minister, Sir Robert Melville was not so devoid of the feelings of a gentleman as not to make some effort to improve her personal comforts, and was probably very glad of the opportunity of obliging her in such trivial matters, so as to entitle himself to her gratitude in the not impossible event of her restoration to her royal authority. The following acknowledgment of certain articles of dress, which he succeeded in procuring from her costly and elaborate wardrobe, for her use at Lochleven, may perhaps be more interesting to some of the fair readers of this biography of Mary Stuart, than the documentary proofs it has been considered necessary to produce of Sir Robert Melville's agency in the confederacy between the conspirators and the English government for depriving her of her throne. "I confess," she says, "to having received a robe of grey velvet; a black Spanish net, ornamented with twenty-two gold aglets," (this was of course to be arranged as a head-

[1] Stevenson's Illustrations, 182, 183.
[2] Sir Robert Melville to Cecil, July 8, 1567—State Paper Office MS.

dress); "a gown of silk camelat, ornamented with thirty-two aglets; a black velvet cloak, and a small one of grey velvet; two gowns, a cloak, and a vasquina of estamine;[1] a pair of crimson satin sleeves, and a vasquina of black camlat."[2] The captive Sovereign had not limited her requisitions to these few things, but they were certainly all she got at that time. She had received previously a vasquina of red satin, rayed with white and furred with martin; a pair of black velvet boots, furred with martin; a pair of crimson satin sleeves, edged with gold fringe; a wrapper of Holland linen; a pair of black silk shoes; two pair of walking-shoes; four thousand pins; and a case full of preserves of various sorts. In the month of July she obtained two pair of velvet shoes; a woollen camisole; a chemise, with plaited sleeves; a little coffer, covered with crimson velvet, ornamented with the letter "F" in silver and gold; and some packets of coloured silks and Spanish chenille for her embroidery; with a dozen and a half of little flowers, painted on canvass, and traced in black silk.[3]

The approbative epithet, "your faithful servant, Robert Melville," applied to that statesman by Queen Elizabeth in the laconic but insulting letter addressed by her to Mary on the 30th of June,[4] might have warned his royal mistress of the danger of putting the slightest trust in his deceitful professions and courtesies. That letter was not, however, received by Mary till a full fortnight after date. It was the credential which ought to have been presented to her by Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, on his arrival in her dominions. But Sir Nicholas was met at Coldingham by Lethington and Sir James Melville, brother to Sir Robert, and conducted by them to Fastcastle, the fortress of Lord Home, where they held a secret consultation.[5] Throckmorton, according to his instructions, was earnest in his demands

[1] This material, which sometimes figures in Mary's wardrobe accounts under the puzzling name of "stemming," or "staming," was a very fine woollen manufacture called "etamine," introduced by her from France.

[2] Melville MSS. in the Archives of the Earl of Leven.

[3] Illustrations of the Reigns of Queen Mary and King James, printed for the Maitland Club. [4] Stevenson's Illustrations, 179. [5] Ibid., 186.

for admission to Queen Mary's presence, for the purpose of persuading her to purchase his Sovereign's aid, by consenting to place her infant son in her hands, for which reason he was not permitted to see her; but there can be no doubt he found means to convey his message. He was instructed to deal both with the conspirators, in whose possession the babe was, and the bereaved mother.[1] Thus the great object of the contention between England and Scotland, which had commenced with the date of Mary's orphanhood, was virtually renewed, even before the son, who was destined to supplant her in the thirteenth month of his age, had been placed on her throne. The conspirators, however willing to oblige Elizabeth, could not part with the royal infant, his safe keeping being their watchword, the possession of his person their only palladium. Well did they know that, if they resigned him to the English Sovereign, his royal mother would be immediately reinstated on her throne, and themselves subjected to the terrible justice of popular vengeance. To Mary the temptation to consent to Elizabeth's requisition was really great, since the babe could scarcely be in worse hands than he was at present; and if she could have been induced to signify her desire to confide him to the protection of her all-powerful kinswoman, it would, at any rate, have been the means of disconcerting the schemes of the perfidious traitors. Elizabeth would in that case have sent an army to her assistance, instead of a shower of gold to turn the balance against her. But no considerations of a personal nature could tempt Mary Stuart to forget the duty and dignity of a queen of Scotland by entertaining such a proposition. Her own life was considered at this juncture to be in extreme jeopardy. Reports were rife in France that she had been murdered, which caused great distress to her royal kindred there, and induced the English ambassador, Sir Henry Norris, to pen in evident consternation the following remarkable sentence, in a letter to his own Sovereign: "I understand that there is a bruit through the Court that the Queen of Scots should

[1] See the series of Throckmorton's letters in Stevenson's Illustrations, and in Keith.

be slain, whereof I think your Majesty is fully by this informed of the truth, which is occasion to make them all sore troubled, as it appeareth they are."[1]

"If there be any truth in Lethington," writes Throckmorton to Cecil, "Du Croc is gone to procure Rambouillet's coming hither, or a man of like quality, to deliver them of their Queen for ever, who shall lead her life in France in an abbey reclused." After his arrival in Edinburgh, he notes "that the Lords appeared perplexed how to get rid of their Queen, which he suspected they intended to do one way or other." The following particulars regarding the royal captive are derived from another of his letters: "The Queen of Scotland remaineth in good health in the Castle of Lochleven, guarded by the Lords Lindsay and Lochleven, the owner of the house, for the Lord Ruthven is employed in another commission, because he began to show favour to the Queen, and to give her intelligence. She is waited on by five or six ladies, four or five gentlewomen, and two chamberers, whereof one is a Frenchwoman. The Earl of Buchan, the Earl of Moray's brother, hath also liberty to come to her at his pleasure. The Lords aforesaid do keep her very straitly."[2] The reason alleged by them to Throckmorton for their misusage of their unfortunate Sovereign, was "that she had refused to join in prosecuting Bothwell as the murderer of her late husband, or to consent to a divorce; for, to add to her misery, she apprehended that she was likely to become by him the mother of a child, whose legitimacy, she considered, would be impugned by the dissolution of that most wretched marriage, and had therefore declared her determination rather to die than permit such a stain to be cast on her honour or that of her offspring." There is no substantial reason to believe, however, that Mary ever gave birth to any other child than her son by her second husband, Henry Lord Darnley.[3]

[1] Stevenson's Illustrations.

[2] Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, July 14, 1567.

[3] The tradition mentioned by Le Laboureur that Mary was delivered of a daughter while in Lochleven, who afterwards became a nun in the convent of Soissons, is not verified by the slightest evidence, and appears utterly devoid of truth.

In the third week of July she made Sir Robert Melville the bearer of a letter to the confederate Lords, with the following requests: "First, that they would have consideration of her health, and change the place of her restraint to the Castle of Stirling, that she might at least have the company and comfort of her son. But if they would not change her from Lochleven, she required to have some other gentlewoman about her," without naming the person to whose society she objected, who was of course Lady Douglas, the paramour of her late royal father. Mary also petitioned "to be allowed the attendance of her apothecary, a valet or groom of the chamber, and some modest minister," but whether of the new Kirk or the old is not specified, "and to have an embroiderer to draw forth such work as she would be occupied about." Lastly, she "requested, if they would not treat her as their Queen, yet to use her as the daughter of the King their late Sovereign, whom many of them knew, and as their Prince's mother."[1] Little attention was paid by the conspirators to these demands, nor would they permit Sir Nicholas Elphinstone, who had been sent from France to her by the Earl of Moray, to proceed to Lochleven Castle to deliver his letter or message. The substance of the letter was, however, well known to Queen Elizabeth, with whom the bearer spent an hour in private conference, when passing through London. Elizabeth spoke much in commendation of Moray to Mr Heneage, one of her Privy Chamber, and said she "should cause Cecil to write a letter in her name to the Queen of Scots, who suspected that he spoke defamedly of her, that he was the best and most faithful subject she had."[2] Moray's letter to his royal sister was to make the like profession in his own name, to express his disapproval of the proceedings of the rebel Lords, "in keeping her in durance," deceitfully assuring her "that he would be true servant to her in all fortunes."[3] If these professions had been sincere, Mary might have kept her crown, and Moray lived to a good old age, instead of receiving the wages of his iniquity, a tragic death, before he com-

[1] Letter of Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, July 18, 1567—Stevenson's Illustrations. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. Tytler, Hist. Scot.

pleted his fortieth year. He might have performed the glorious office of a liberator and a peacemaker, but selfish ambition prevailed. Identifying himself with the victorious dragon of his aspiring mother's dream, who prevailed against the royal lion of Scotland, he pursued the sinuous course which led to the fulfilment of an augury as fatal in its result to himself as to his illustrious victim. At the very moment Moray made deceitful professions of his loyalty to his royal sister, he was in strict correspondence with the traitors whose conduct he affected to condemn, and was enleagued with the Queen of England, whose secret-service-men they were . An English vessel was sent from Rye to Dieppe, expressly for the purpose of smuggling him over from France,[1] the Archbishop of Glasgow having shown the King of France that he was, as he ever had been, the secret head of the conspiracy against his Queen.[2] In the mean time, Queen Elizabeth expressed her desire to the Lords of Secret Council, through her ambassador Throckmorton, "that they would suspend all proceedings till the arrival of the Earl of Moray;" who, before he ventured to proceed to Scotland, came to receive instructions from the lips of Cecil and Elizabeth that might not be intrusted to any third person.

The young King of France, having from his childhood loved Queen Mary better than anything in the world, was eager to succour her, and doubtless would have made some effort for that purpose, had it been permitted him. All he could do, after his fruitless personal appeal to the Earl of Moray on her behalf, was to send for the Duke of Châtelherault, and urge him on the same subject; the Duke, less fortunate than Moray, had been living in exile in France ever since their insurrectionary proceedings on account of Mary's marriage with Darnley, in July 1565. When, however, the French King, after enlarging on the misery Scotland was in, in consequence of the captivity of the Queen, inquired "whether he were willing to unite with him in making an effort for her deliverance and restoration to the

[1] Letter to Sir William Cecil, July 13, 1567—Stevenson's Illustrations.
[2] Buchanan's History of Scotland.

royal authority?" he replied, "that as he had ventured his life for her sake at Pinkie, and other places, when he was guardian of her realm, so was he willing to hazard the same, with all the friends he could gather, to redress his Sovereign's wrongs."[1] To this loyal declaration the King replied with warm expressions of thankfulness, telling him at the same time, "that as the case was such as admitted of no delay, he hoped he would hasten home to Scotland, where his presence as first prince of the blood might do much good," begging him to take vigorous measures, and promised "on the faith of a prince to aid all who would aid her to the uttermost of his power. For though," continued his Majesty, "the Queen of England do make fair semblance in this matter, yet do I not greatly trust her, for I have discovered of late that she doth secretly practise with the Lords to work her own commodity, as the sending thither of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, and certain money, doth well declare. But it shall cost her as dear as anything that ever she took in hand." Monsieur de Martigny, who was standing by, exclaimed, "Give me but three thousand harquebussiers, paid for three months, and I will set the Queen of Scots at liberty in spite of her rebel Lords, or any other of her adversaries, or return to France no more." The youthful Sovereign commended his spirit, and would fain have complied; but the Queen-mother damped his romantic ardour by observing, "that it was vain to talk of such matters when they had irons enough in the fire of their own to attend to;" which the Constable de Montmorenci confirmed with the sarcastic rejoinder, "Ho, ho! is it now time to enter again into these matters?"[2] The English ambassador, after detailing this scene to his royal mistress, observes, "The Queen-mother, I know, loves not the Queen of Scotland; and but that she feareth to be prevented by your Majesty, either in courtesy or otherwise, in this time of her need, she would let her try it by the teeth for any great devotion she hath to procure her liberty."[3]

Although both Mary and her only child, the heir-

[1] Letter of Sir Henry Norris to Queen Elizabeth—Stevenson's Illustrations. [2] Ibid. [3] Brantôme.

apparent of the realm, were in the hands of the Lords of Secret Council, and held by them in separate strongholds in the sure keeping, the one of Moray's mother, brothers, and brother-in-law Lord Lindsay, at Lochleven, the other in that of his uncle, the Earl of Mar, at Stirling Castle, the game was still a doubtful one. It was found difficult to persuade persons of common sense that their mild and merciful Queen, who had borne her faculties so meekly, and abstained from shedding the blood of her greatest foes, could have become the sanguinary and unwomanly fiend her persecutors represented her. She had returned to them, in the first flower of her youth and beauty, a widow in her nineteenth year, after passing through the ordeal of the most licentious and seductive court in Europe with unsullied fame. Her departure from France had been lamented by the good and noble of that realm as a national calamity, and she had been followed to the place of her embarkation by the tears and blessings of all degrees of people. She had not yet reigned full seven years in Scotland, but they had been years of blessedness to her subjects, such as Scotland had never seen before, and might never see again. She had healed the wounds and remedied the miseries which nineteen years of war, foreign and internal, had inflicted on that unhappy country. She had employed her gentle influence, as woman should, in reconciling feuds, smoothing rough places, and teaching vindictive and hereditary foes to learn from her own example the Christian duty of forgiveness. Law reforms of an important nature, and beneficial to all classes, especially to the poor, had been effected under her wise and maternal jurisdiction. She had laboured to mollify the persecuting spirit of the times, and that so successfully that an "Act for Liberty of Conscience," originating purely with herself, had passed in her last Parliament. She had studied to promote those useful and ornamental arts and manufactures, which not only gave refinement and grace to a hitherto barbarous state of society, but enabled the people to provide for the wants of life, instead of relying, as the previous generations had done, on predatory habits or conventual alms. Never had

any sovereign effected so much good in so short a period of time, under circumstances of such difficulty. It was necessary to represent her the exact reverse of what she really was, and to turn the pulpit into a political rostrum for her defamation, before the hearts of the people of Scotland could be alienated from her lawful ruler.

The preliminary notes of the ecclesiastical trumpet of sedition were sounded on Sunday, July 13th, by "the proclamation for a general fast and convention of the brethren in Edinburgh, to last from that day to the following Sunday." Mary's formidable antagonist, John Knox, returned on the 17th, like a giant refreshed by the fifteen months of repose he had enjoyed since his precipitate departure from Edinburgh on her triumphant return to her metropolis, after her bloodless victory over her cruel foes. The wheel of fortune had revolved since then. Mary had acted according to her natural clemency, by extending the golden sceptre of mercy, instead of smiting with the sword of justice the guilty law-breakers who had invaded her in her own palace, shed blood in her presence, constituted her a prisoner, treated her with every species of insult and cruelty, and deliberated in council to take away her life. She had forgiven them, but they had injured her too deeply to be softened from their malignant purposes by her magnanimity. They had wreaked their murderous vengeance on her husband for breaking the unnatural league into which they had seduced him in his youth and inexperience, and they were about to charge their own crime on her. They spoke first to Throckmorton "of prosecuting justice against the Queen, of making a process to condemn her, to crown the Prince, and to keep her in prison all the days of her life; and lastly, of making her condemnation public, and depriving her of her dignity and her life."[1] The Queen desired to submit her cause to a Parliament, but they intended to pack a convention among themselves, not to try, but to condemn and slay her, after a judicial form, in violation of law and justice.

[1] Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, July 19, 1567—Keith.

It is painful to record that John Knox suffered himself to be deluded by these unscrupulous leaders of a successful faction, into lending the aid of his stormy eloquence in furtherance of their regicidal designs against the life of his desolate and oppressed Sovereign. Throckmorton, who was among his auditors on Sunday, July 19th, appears to have been for the first time startled and offended at his virulence, and considered it his duty to admonish his political friends on the subject. The passage shall be given in Throckmorton's own words. "This day,[1] being at Mr Knox's sermon, who took a piece of Scripture forth of the Books of the Kings, and did inveigh vehemently against the Queen, and persuaded extremities towards her by application of his text, I did, after the sermon, move such of the Council as were present to persuade the Lords to advise the preachers not to intermeddle with the end of these matters, until they were resolved among themselves what they were minded to do; for otherwise the ministers, going on so rigorously as they did in their daily preachings, might so draw the multitude from them and their resolutions, that though among themselves they would make choice of some reasonable end, yet they should not be able to bring it to pass, being once, by the preachers' arguments and persuasions, settled another way."

Full well did the wily traitors know what they were about; so the ministers, instead of being cautioned, were encouraged to proceed in their maledictions. Knox continued "to pour it out cannon-hot" against his defenceless Queen, branding her openly from St Giles's pulpit as a murderess, coupled with the coarsest terms of vituperation, and denouncing "the great plagues of God to Scotland if she were spared."[2] It would be difficult to justify a minister of the Gospel for using such language of a convicted criminal, for the Archangel Michael refrained from bringing a railing accusation against Satan himself; but Knox had accustomed himself to rail against his Sovereign ever since her return from France in her early widowhood. His polemic zeal

[1] Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, July 19, 1567—Keith. [2] Ibid.

had excited him, in the days of her prosperity, to institute comparisons between her and Jezebel, Nero, Herod, and the daughter of Herodias; so it was nothing either new or wonderful for him to cite and enlarge on certain passages of Jewish history as arguments against her, nor that he should pervert texts of Scripture into exhortations for her slaughter, now she was a defenceless captive in the hands of those who thirsted for her blood. Yet these invectives and denunciations were but coldly received by the people at first; and notwithstanding the urgent letters that were addressed by the ministers, exhorting the leading men to arm against the Queen's party, the conspirators found themselves in a perilous minority. They therefore determined to take the bold step of inducing the Queen, either by persuasions or personal violence, to resign her regal office to her infant son. Every art by which her feminine terrors could be excited was used. She was taught to believe her life was in hourly peril. Sometimes she was menaced with being removed into the old Pictish tower in Lochleven Castle, secluded from the society of her faithful ladies, and shut up in utter solitude to perish; at other times—and this was the favourite threat—she was told "there was a purpose of stifling her between two mattresses, and then suspending her from one of the bed-posts as if she had committed suicide." Considering the terrible and successive scenes of excitement she had been doomed to suffer, ever since that night of horror when the ruffian band had murdered her secretary in her presence, the only wonder is she did not actually fulfil the frantic threat she had too often, in her intolerable misery, used of putting a period to her own life. The crime of self-destruction is, however, rarely committed by members of the Church of Rome, as it involves the loss of those rites which they deem essential to salvation.

A special convention of the nobles and gentlemen of the rebel faction, which was attended by the Earls of Glencairn and Mar, the Lords Sempill and Ochiltree, with some of the gentlemen of the west country, who mustered to the number of two hundred horsemen, was held preparatory to the great stroke that was meditated by the leaders of the

party against their captive Sovereign. The Lord Lindsay, being sent for by them from Lochleven, received commission and charge to return thither with Sir Robert Melville, and inform her Majesty "that, in consequence of the charges against her, they required her to submit quietly with their desire for her to demit her regal authority, and to give consent, under her hand and seal, that her son might be crowned as their King and Sovereign, and thus doing, they would endeavour to save both her life and honour, which otherwise stood in great danger."[1] It was further resolved, "that, in case she would not be conformable to their dictation in this respect, her liberty should be restrained further than it had yet been, and the ladies and gentlemen that were about her should be sequestered from her. And as far as I can understand," proceeds our authority,[2] "in the case of the Queen's refusal to these their demands, they mind to proceed, both with violence and force, as well for the coronation of the Prince as for the overthrow of the Queen. At this present the Countess of Moray, wife to the Earl of Moray, is with the Queen at Lochleven. I do perceive, if these men cannot by fair means induce the Queen to their purpose, they mean to charge her with these three crimes: Tyranny, for breach and violation of their laws and decrees of the realm, as well that which they call common laws as their statute laws; and, namely, the breach of those statutes which were enacted in her absence, and without her consent. Secondly, they mean to charge her with incontinency, as well with the Earl of Bothwell as with others, having (*as they say*) sufficient proof against her for this crime. Thirdly, they mean to charge her with the murder of her husband, whereof (*they say*) they have as apparent proof against her as may be, as well by the testimony of her own handwriting, which they have recovered, as also by sufficient witnesses."

The last clause is important, because it is the first allusion made by the conspirators to the supposititious letters which Morton produced in the September following, in Council,

[1] Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, July 24, 1567.
[2] Ibid., July 25, 1567—Keith.

alleging that they were taken in Mary's silver casket, June 20, 1567, on the person of George Dalgleish, Bothwell's servant. Now the fact is self-evident, that, if they had become possessed on the 20th of June of letters in Mary's handwriting, calculated to convict her of illicit love for Bothwell, complicity in her husband's murder, and collusion in her own abduction, they would not have reiterated on the 26th of that month a public proclamation of Bothwell's overt acts of treason, "in intercepting her Majesty, carrying her forcibly away, holding her as his prisoner, compelling her to marry him, and keeping her under restraint." Far less would they have used these strong expressions in their official letter in reply to the inquiries Sir Nicholas Throckmorton had been instructed to make from his own Sovereign: "How shamefully the Queen our Sovereign was led captive, and by fear, force, and, as by many conjectures be well suspected, other extraordinary and more unlawful means compelled." And here they explain, in the most positive words and homely phraseology, the indignity to which their Sovereign had been subjected from her husband's murderer, and how afterwards he "kept her environed with a continual guard of two hundred harquebussiers, as well day as night, wherever she went, besides a number of his servants and others, naughty persons, pirates, and murderers. What rested," they ask, "to finish the work begun, and to accomplish the whole desire of his ambitious heart, but to send the son after the father? and as might be suspected, seeing him [Bothwell] keep another wife in store, to make the Queen drink also of the same cup, to the end he might invest himself with the crown of this realm;" adding, "that they firmly believed that she should [would] not have lived with him one half-year to an end, as might be conjectured from the short time they lived together.[1] All which considerations had rendered it their duty," they declare, "to take up arms to deliver their Sovereign from his wicked hands;" yet, in the end, regardless of all consistency, they go on to assert, "they found her so affectionately disposed towards him, that it became necessary to sequestrate her per-

[1] Printed in Anderson, and in Stevenson's Illustrations.

son for a season from his company;" omitting the important fact that she had left him voluntarily to put herself into their hands, and that they immediately imprisoned her, without making the slightest effort to capture him. Now, if they had really been in possession of the letters which they afterwards brought forward, for lack of other evidence against her, they would not have failed to mention them in self-defence, and would probably have gratified Throckmorton with copies in corroboration of the vehement affection they now began to pretend their Queen entertained for Bothwell. But their official letter of July 21 contains no hint of the kind. Three days later, July 24, when they had made up their minds to delude or intimidate the royal captive into a resignation of her crown, they boasted "that they could prove her guilty of incontinency with Bothwell and others, and also her husband's murder, by her own handwriting and sufficient witnesses"—boasts which they neither did nor could make good. Throckmorton significantly inquired of Lethington, "how far the words 'necessity of their cause,' with which they had concluded their letter to him, extended, and to what interpretation they might be stretched?" To this home question he only replied by shaking his head and slily ejaculating, "*Vous êtes un renard!*"[1] That Throckmorton considered Queen Mary's life in the utmost danger appears from the observation, contained in his letter to Queen Elizabeth of the same date, "This is also to be feared, that when these Lords have so far proceeded as to touch their Sovereign in honour and credit, they will never think to find any safety as long as she liveth, and so will not only deprive her of her estate, but also of her life."[2]

At this dark epoch of her fortunes, Mary appeared calmer and more cheerful than she had been for many months. She no longer rejected her food, but attended to her health and dress, read, worked with her needle, and took all the exercise and recreation the narrow limits of her wave-encircled prison permitted. She devised pastimes to beguile the tedium of their confinement to her ladies, and even

[1] Stevenson's Illustrations, 237. [2] Ibid., 240.

danced and played at cards with them, although perfectly aware of the precarious tenure on which she held her existence.[1]

The conspirators, calling themselves the Lords of Secret Council, having completed their arrangements for their long-meditated project of depriving her of her crown, summoned Lord Lindsay to Edinburgh, and on the 23d of July delivered to him and Sir Robert Melville three deeds, to which they were instructed to obtain her signature, either by flattering words or absolute force.[2] The first contained a declaration, as if from herself, "that being in infirm health, and worn out with the cares of government, she had taken purpose voluntarily to resign her crown and office to her dearest son James, Prince of Scotland." In the second, "her trusty brother James, Earl of Moray, was constituted Regent for the Prince her son, during the minority of the royal infant." The third appointed a provisional council of regency, consisting of Morton and the other Lords of Secret Council, to carry on the government till Moray's return; or, in case of his refusing to accept it, till the Prince arrived at the legal age for exercising it himself.[3] Aware that Mary would not easily be induced to execute such instruments, Sir Robert Melville was especially employed to cajole her into this political suicide. That ungrateful courtier, who had been employed and trusted by his unfortunate Sovereign ever since her return from France, and had received nothing but benefits from her, undertook this office. Having obtained a private interview with her, he deceitfully entreated her "to sign certain deeds that would be presented to her by Lindsay, as the only means of preserving her life, which, he assured her, was in the most imminent danger." Then he gave her a turquoise ring, telling her "it was sent to her from the Earls of Argyll, Huntley, and Atholl, Secretary Lethington, and the Laird of Grange, who loved her Majesty, and had by that token accredited him to exhort her to avert the peril to which she

[1] MS. Letter of the Earl of Bedford to Cecil, July 17, 1567—in the State Paper Office, Berwick.

[2] Anderson's Collections; Tytler; Bell.

[3] Ibid.

would be exposed, if she ventured to refuse the requisition of the Lords of Secret Council, whose designs, they well knew, were to take her life, either secretly or by a mock trial among themselves."[1] Finding the Queen impatient of this insidious advice, he produced a letter from the English ambassador Throckmorton, out of the scabbard of his sword, telling her "he had concealed it there at peril of his own life, in order to convey it to her;"[2]—a paltry piece of acting, worthy of the parties by whom it had been devised, for the letter had been written for the express purpose of inducing Mary to accede to the demission of her regal dignity, telling her, as if in confidence, "that it was the Queen of England's sisterly advice that she should not irritate those who had her in their power, by refusing the only concession that could save her life; and observing, that nothing that was done under her present circumstances could be of any force when she regained her freedom." Mary, however, resolutely refused to sign the deeds, declaring with truly royal courage, that she would not make herself a party to the treason of her own subjects, by acceding to their lawless requisition, which, as she truly alleged, "proceeded only of the ambition of a few, and was far from the desire of her people."

The fair-spoken Melville having reported his ill-success to his coadjutor Lord Lindsay, Moray's brother-in-law, the bully of the party, who had been selected for the honourable office of extorting by force from the royal captive the concession she denied, that brutal ruffian burst rudely into her presence, and, flinging the deeds violently on the table before her, told her to sign them without delay, or worse would befall her. "What!" exclaimed Mary, "shall I set my hand to a deliberate falsehood, and to gratify the ambition of my nobles relinquish the office God hath given to me, to my son, an infant little more than a year old, incapable of governing the realm, that my brother Moray may reign in his name?" She was proceeding to demonstrate the unreasonableness of what was required of her, but Lindsay contemptuously interrupted her with scornful laughter; then, scowling ferociously upon her, he swore with a deep

[1] Sir James Melville's Memoirs. [2] Ibid.

oath, "that, if she would not sign those instruments, he would do it with her heart's blood, and cast her into the lake to feed the fishes."[1] Full well did the defenceless woman know how capable he was of performing his threat, having seen his rapier reeking with human blood shed in her presence, when he assisted at the butchery of her unfortunate secretary. The ink was scarcely dry of her royal signature to the remission she had granted to him for that outrage. But, reckless of the fact that he owed his life, his forfeit lands, yea, the very power of injuring her, to her generous clemency, he thus requited the grace she had, in evil hour for herself, accorded to him. Her heart was too full to continue the unequal contest. "I am not yet five-and-twenty"—she pathetically observed—somewhat more she would have said, but her utterance failed her, and she began to weep with hysterical emotion. Sir Robert Melville, affecting an air of the deepest concern, whispered in her ear an earnest entreaty for her "to save her life by signing the papers," reiterating "that whatever she did would be invalid, because extorted by force."[2]

Mary's tears continued to flow, but sign she would not, till Lindsay, infuriated by her resolute resistance, swore "that, having begun the matter, he would also finish it then and there," forced the pen into her reluctant hand, and, according to the popular version of this scene of lawless violence, grasped her arm in the struggle so rudely, as to leave the prints of his mail-clad fingers visibly impressed. In an access of pain and terror, with streaming eyes and averted head, she affixed her regal signature to the three deeds, without once looking upon them. Sir Walter Scott alludes to Lindsay's barbarous treatment of his hapless Queen in these nervous lines,—

> "And haggard Lindsay's iron eye,
> That saw fair Mary weep in vain."

George Douglas, the youngest son of the evil lady of Lochleven, being present, indignantly remonstrated with his savage brother-in-law, Lindsay, for his misconduct; and

[1] Innocens de Marie Stuart—Jebb's Collections. [2] Chalmers.

though hitherto employed as one of the persons whose office it was to keep guard over her, he became from that hour the most devoted of her friends and champions, and the contriver of her escape. His elder brother, Sir William Douglas, the castellan, absolutely refused to be present, entered a protest against the wrong that had been perpetrated under his roof, and besought the Queen to give him a letter of exoneration, certifying that he had nothing to do with it, and that it was against his consent, which letter she gave him.[1]

The agitation and distress Mary had suffered in the contest, brought on a fever which confined her to her bed for several weeks. The Countess of Moray, who had been sojourning for a few days with her mother-in-law, Lady Douglas, at Lochleven Castle, now returned to St Andrews. "There was," says Throckmorton, "great sorrow betwixt the Queen and her at their meeting, and much greater at their parting."[2]

Lindsay hastened to Edinburgh, and exultingly presented to his confederates the deeds which were to be imposed on Mary's subjects in token of her voluntary resignation of her crown to her babe. But an important ceremony was yet required to render them valid. They were not sealed, and her Majesty's Privy Seal was in the keeping of an honest and courageous gentleman of the loyal family of Sinclair. As Thomas Sinclair's honourable principles were too well known to admit the possibility of tampering with him, a warrant in the Queen's name had been prepared, in the form of a precept addressed to him, requiring him "to affix her Majesty's Privy Seal to the three instruments for the demission of her crown, appointing the Earl of Moray regent for the infant Prince, and a Provisional Council to act in the interim." This warrant bore the royal signature, having been either extorted from her Majesty at the same time with the others, or, as only three are mentioned, forged, on consideration of "the necessity of their cause," by the Lords

[1] Goodall.
[2] Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth—Stevenson's Illustrations.

of Secret Council.[1] Lindsay having succeeded in forcing the Queen to sign the documents asserting her voluntary resignation of the crown, was deputed to get them sealed. Accompanied by a party of the confederates, he proceeded to the Privy Seal Office, and in the name and behalf of the Lords of Secret Council required Thomas Sinclair to seal the said instruments, presenting the alleged warrant from the Queen authorising him to do so. Faithful to the trust that had been confided to him by his unfortunate Sovereign, Sinclair intrepidly replied, "As long as the Queen's Majesty is in ward, I will seal no such letters as be extraordinary." Lindsay, finding he was neither to be persuaded nor intimidated, effected his purpose by violence, tore the seal from him, and by dint of superior numbers compelled him to affix it to the three instruments, Sinclair protesting all the time that "what he did was against his will, through a force he could not resist."[2]

The next day the conspirators came to the lodgings of the English ambassador Throckmorton, booted and spurred, to announce the pretended abdication of the Queen, on which occasion the following statement was shamelessly made by Lethington, in the character of their spokesman: "My Lords have willed me to declare unto you what it hath pleased the Queen my Sovereign to conclude on, upon her own voluntary advice. That is to say, finding herself both in health unmeet to take the care and governance of this realm, and also unfortunate in the administration thereof, being very desirous to see her son, the young Prince, settled in her seat in her lifetime, hath commanded, under her handwriting, to proceed to the coro-

[1] The cause of historic truth is indebted to that learned and indefatigable antiquary John Riddell, of the Faculty of Advocates, for the discovery of this important document, together with the protest of the indignant Sinclair, duly witnessed.

[2] This proceeding, which occurred on the afternoon of July 25, 1567, is thus noticed in the supplication of the Lords of the Queen's party to the Parliament, on the 12th of June 1571:—

"It is not to be passed over with silence in what manner the Privy Seal was appended to that letter: how it was violently and by force reft out of the keeper's hands, may appear by authentic documents: so as her Majesty's subscription was purchased by force, so was the seal extorted by force."—Pitcairn's Preface to Bannatyne's Memorials.

nation of her son, as a thing that she shall take most pleasure to see;"[1] adding "that they were then about to proceed to Stirling to perform her desire, by the inauguration of the young Prince," and requested him to assist at the said solemnity as the representative of the Queen of England. Throckmorton refused to commit himself by appearing at the coronation, perceiving that the revolution that was to transfer the regal diadem of Mary Stuart to her infant son was not the act of the nation, nor even of a closely balanced moiety of the people, but the successful enterprise of a daring section of the nobility, consisting only of five earls, eight lords, and their armed followers, supported by a company of preachers.

Our shrewd English diplomatist, in his letters to both Cecil and Leicester, written on the same day, makes the following significant observation on the progressive acts of the conspiracy against the government and life of Mary Stuart: "It is to be feared that this tragedy will end in the Queen's person, after this coronation, as it did begin in the person of David the Italian, and the Queen's husband."

Can words speak plainer his opinion that the real actors by whom the murder of Darnley was perpetrated were the assassins of David Riccio, and that the deposition and slaughter of their hapless Sovereign was the ultimate object to which these crimes had been the prelude? Throckmorton's remark assumes the greater weight in the scale of evidence when the position occupied by him is considered; for he had been partially admitted behind the scenes, and was writing confidentially on the aspect of Scottish affairs to his own colleagues, men who had had guilty foreknowledge of every plot that had been devised to compass the destruction of the unfortunate North British Queen.

"Mary's affirmation that Lady Lennox believed and declared her innocent," observes Malcolm Laing, in his one-sided dissertation on the death of Darnley, "amounts to no more in the scale of evidence than her own affirmation of her innocence, which she never failed to assert." But

[1] Letter of Throckmorton to Queen Elizabeth, June 26, 1567—Stevenson's Illustrations.

Mary was, to use the words of Darnley, who knew her better than her calumniators, "a true Princess," and whatsoever she asserted has sooner or later been verified by documentary proofs. A letter from Lady Lennox to her has recently been found among Cecil's papers,—one which proves the friendly correspondence in which Darnley's mother had established herself with his royal widow eight years after his death, and which demonstrates, as forcibly as words can go, her respect and affection for Mary, and her indignant conviction of the wickedness of the traitors by whom she had been dethroned.

It is perhaps impossible to conclude the present volume of Mary Stuart's biography more satisfactorily to the lovers of truth, than by placing this letter before them. In point of chronology, it belongs to a later epoch of this biography, having been penned by Lady Lennox when Mary was a forlorn captive, withering in an English prison; but as I have been accused of partial views, in Mary's favour, by reviewers, who have neither had patience nor inclination to enter into the documentary evidences by which I have been guided, it becomes expedient to bring so important a voucher of her innocence forward to prove that Darnley's mother was satisfied with her; and if she were, who shall dare to doubt her?

A fac-simile tracing of the holograph document, from a reserved volume in the State Paper Office, is annexed.

MARGARET COUNTESS OF LENNOX TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.[1]

[November 1575.]

"It may please your Majesty, I have received your token and mind, both by your letter and other ways, much to my comfort, specially perceiving what zealous natural care your Majesty hath of our sweet and peerless jewel[2] in Scotland. I have been no less fearful and careful as your Majesty of him, that the wicked Governor[3] should not have power to do ill to his

[1] From the original in the handwriting of Margaret Countess of Lennox, extant in State Paper Office—Correspondence of Mary Queen of Scots.

[2] James VI., son of Queen Mary, and grandson of Margaret Douglas. He was then nine years of age.

[3] The Regent Morton, with whom, at least until June 1573, Margaret Countess of Lennox held most intimate correspondence. He was her cousin-german, and hitherto had contrived to prejudice her against her daughter-in-law, the Queen of Scots. This letter, however, gives ample evidence of the change in the convictions of Darnley's mother.

[illegible]

[illegible] may please your ma[illegible] I have received your letter and my dear boy Byron comes and stays some months with us. I especially pray him to bring with him his warm cape which I left with a bag of other things and which I find is confound. not. [illegible] to my comfort. I have been more pleased than I can tell at your ma[illegible] [illegible] and the good behaviour of [illegible] which I hope will not be neglected. But I pray that [illegible] upon the receipt of your ma[illegible] [illegible] and I hope [illegible] I am [illegible] thanks who [illegible] and [illegible] my life I had [illegible] [illegible] to [illegible] and [illegible] I pray that [illegible] and for [illegible] you [illegible] to come, he [illegible] [illegible] year but may and will [illegible] I [illegible] for [illegible] [illegible] might be allowed to the [illegible]

person, whom God preserve from his enemies! Nothing I neglected; but presently upon the receipt of your Majestie's, the Court being far off, I sent one trusty, who hath done so much as if I myself had been there, both to understand the past and for prevention of evil to come: he hath dealt with such as both may and will have regard to our jewel's preservation, and will use a bridle to the wicked when need require.

"I beseech your Majesty, fear not, but trust in God that all shall be well; the treachery of your traitors is known better than before. I shall always play my part to your Majesty's content, willing God, so as may tend to both our comforts. And now must I yield your Majesty my most humble thanks for your good remembrances and bounty to our little daughter[1] here, who some day may serve your Highness, Almighty God grant, and to your Majesty long and happy life.—Hackney, this vi^th of November."

Between the date and the signature of the Countess of Lennox intervenes this pretty little letter from her daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Cavendish, wife of Charles Stuart, Earl of Lennox, Lord Darnley's brother. The young Lady Lennox, being the daughter of the Countess of Shrewsbury, had been domesticated the greater part of her life with Mary Queen of Scots, and was the mother of Darnley's niece, the infant Arabella Stuart.

"I most humbly thank your Majesty that it pleased your Highness to remember me, your poor servant, both with a token, and in my Lady Grace's letter, which is not little to my comfort. I can but wish and pray God for your Majesty's long and happy estate, till time I may do your Majesty better service, which I think long to do; and shall always be as ready thereto as any servant your Majesty hath, according as in duty I am bound. I beseech your Highness, pardon these rude lines, and accept the good heart of the writer, who loves and honours your Majesty unfeignedly.

"Your Majesty's most humble and lowly servant during life,

"E. LENNOX."

Then follows the signature of Darnley's mother, who subscribes herself

"Your Majesty's most humble and loving mother and aunt,

"M. L."

Indorsed—"My Lady's Grace the Countess of Lennox to the Q. of Scots."

This indorsement, being in the hand of Thomas Philipps, Cecil's spy-decipherer, proves that this letter was intercepted by Queen Elizabeth; and the date indicates that it was addressed by the Countess of Lennox to her royal daughter-in-law at the period of Mary's captivity at Chatsworth.

[1] Arabella Stuart, then a few months old.

One peculiarity of the manners and customs of correspondence in the sixteenth century is apparent in the original of this curious and important letter. The reader may observe slight tracings down each side of our fac-simile; these indicate the cuttings which may be seen in the paper, just like button-holes before they are worked, and were cut all together when the epistle was written, and folded square, perhaps cut with button-hole scissors. A broad tress of floss silk was then drawn through all the apertures, and knotted and sealed down. Thus no one could open the square packet without clipping the silk. Many important private letters to royal personages, extant in the State Paper Office, have been closed up in this mode. To some the floss silk still remains attached. The despatch, thus secured, was enclosed in an envelope, on which was written the address of the recipient party. In the next century the fashion was to pass the silken band over the envelope.

END OF VOL. V.

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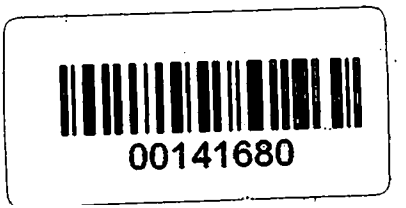
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